Chapter 12

Urban Thespiai: the Late Hellenistic to Late Roman pottery

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Introduction

The survey of the urban area of ancient Thespiai was carried out in 1985 and 1986, and all ceramic finds (from the urban *and* the associated rural survey) were subsequently studied by John Hayes. As part of the Boeotia Project's publication programme (Bintliff *et al*. 2007, 2013), we undertook four campaigns – in January 2008, April 2009 and 2011, and May 2012 – during which the Late Hellenistic and Roman-period ceramic finds were re-studied, grid unit by grid unit. All the pottery from urban Thespiai was in fact re-evaluated by the different period specialists.

John Hayes' original work – kindly made available to us – obviously offered an essential starting point. Yet, with nearly 25 years having elapsed since that original work, the re-study aimed to take into account newly published knowledge and insights, as well as our own growing understanding of Roman-period pottery from other sites in Boeotia, particularly the urban sites of Tanagra, Koroneia and Hyettos. Thus, a substantial amount of new information was captured, and the terminology was made uniform so as to provide a better basis for comparison with data from elsewhere within Boeotia, as well as beyond. Furthermore, some 500 sherds could be added to the original database, which now holds (for all periods) 14,345 entries, after double entries and joining sherds (with fresh breaks) were set aside.

This chapter, first, introduces the framework concerning the methodology, chronology and terminology of the data studied, after which the pottery proper is presented, with a breakdown by chronological phase. Next, the material in question will be looked at from an economic point of view, so as to place Thespiai within a wider Boeotian and, *in extenso*, a Mediterranean context. This chapter also offers thoughts on the functional properties of the pottery – a line of research pursued within the Boeotia Project more generally, as well as elsewhere (Poblome *et al*. 2004–2005 [2008–2009]; Poblome *et al*. 2012; Willet 2012) – and the question whether, and how, this translates into surface distribution, with the aim of determining whether or not functionally distinct urban zones can be singled out. The chronological balance in this chapter will tip increasingly in favour of the Late Roman era; that period is by far the best represented, and consequently should allow of more reliable analyses. The chapter concludes with a summary of the more significant trends and conclusions that can be distilled from the dataset.

Methodology, chronology and terminology

Methodology

The Boeotia Project has long relied on a sherd-by-sherd analysis of all collected pottery fragments (the survey methodology proper is discussed elsewhere in this volume (Chapter 3)). In this way, each sherd – numbered individually by hand – is represented by a unique record in the project's database(s), and is accompanied by a range of (meta)data based on pre-defined parameters. In addition to such basic administrative data elements as sherd and grid unit number, year of collection and so forth, other kinds of information include the kind of vessel, chronology, and any decorative aspects. Ascribing a (tentative) function to each fragment – through combined interpretation of fabric and fragment-shape-decoration – allows us to explore this line of thought, which resulted in interesting insights into the proportional relation between local/close-regional *versus* imported ceramic products at Tanagra (Willet 2012). Table 12.1 captures the functional framework as employed for the Boeotia Project's Roman-period pottery.

It is to some extent an artificial framework, based on presumed associations, and things could definitely

Table 12.1. *The functional framework used by the Boeotia Project for the Roman-period pottery.*

Function	Shapes
Food Consumption	Bowl, dish, fishplate, plate
Beverage Consumption	Beaker, bowl, bowl/cup, chalice, cup, dish, kantharos, mouldmade bowl, mug
Food Serving	Platter, tray
Food Preparation	Bowl, casserole, cooking dish, cooking pot, jug, lid, mortarium, pan, pounder, strainer/colander
Transport	Amphora, stopper
Transport/Storage	Jar/amphora
Multipurpose	Basin, lekanè
Liquid Serving	Chalice, hydria, jug, juglet, krater, pitcher
Storage	Jar, lid, pithos, pithoid shape, storage bin
Textile Production	Loomweight, spindle whorl
Lighting	Oil lamp
Honey Production	Beehive, beehive lid
Cosmetics	Unguentarium
Architectural	Tile, floor tile, waterpipe, hypocaust tile
Pottery Production	Waster, mould
Religious/Ritual	Figurine, miniature vessel, statuette
Unidentified	–

be said against its use or, rather its too rigid application. For example, we take most open and closed shapes or fragments, when in fine(r) fabrics and covered with a slip, to have been predominantly used for the serving and consumption of food and beverages, and they are classified as such; whilst closed shapes in coarse(r) fabrics would be classified under food preparation. Yet one should by no means reckon things to have been that simple.

This method is nonetheless preferable to ignoring 'function' completely: it is our conviction that functional parameters should at least be explored, chronologically and spatially, as an additional tool in trying to understand and interpret the collected data. That said, the proposed functional scheme should be handled with an open mind. This means that the use of the range of vessels and the composition of functional assemblages is likely to have varied greatly, being dependent on the availability and supply of pottery, the settlement's general economic and cultural outlook, a person's or family's social standing, etc. In brief, the way in which people will have dealt with their pottery (as with other material culture) is not to be captured by any static proportional scheme. At present we simply know too little to put forward secure statements. At the same time, however, some basic assumptions can be made as to the primary use of certain vessels – for instance table-wares, cooking wares, amphorae and oil lamps – this although a second or even further life for a number of functional shapes has been archaeologically proven (Peña 2007). Some possibilities are explored at the end of this chapter.

Such a time-consuming way of working nonetheless allows us to capture a detailed level of information, and proves beneficial once the interpretative stages are reached. The raw (meta)data thus gathered form the basis for all subsequent analyses and interpretation.

It should be briefly emphasized here that the interpretation (chronological, functional, economic and so on) of *survey* pottery faces particular methodological problems. Whereas vessel profiles may be reconstructed from excavated pottery, survey pottery almost never offers such opportunities; morphological and/or typological identification is thus more constrained, which prompts a comparatively greater dependence on fabric identification. Quite apart from the absence of stratigraphic context, and often of diagnostic features too, a greater or at times even sole reliance on fabric results in long(er), multi-period chronologies for the majority of the data. This is a particularly challenging factor, in the Boeotian context, in respect of the local and/or regional wares (see below, where some efforts to overcome it will be offered).

This condition is further exacerbated by the inherent 'palimpsest' character of survey pottery, a phenomenon that applies to a very large group of ancient sites. The last major phase of occupation of a settlement is generally the best represented and therefore the most readily definable on the surface, simultaneously blurring and 'burying' our understanding and interpretation of earlier phases, or more circumscribed occupation in later periods. Whereas this may also apply to excavated sites, there each stratigraphic unit offers much better opportunities to associate different types and shapes with fabrics and *vice versa* (even though residual and intrusive types have to be reckoned with), by comparison with survey pottery, where making closer associations is greatly restricted, precisely because of its generally mixed composition. Such factors often cause the collected fragments to be dated between two or more periods, resulting in such chronological designations as 'Classical–Late Roman', 'Hellenistic–Mid-Roman', and so on. Table 12.2 displays the relative quantities of securely and less securely identified pottery relevant to this chapter.

Table 12.2. *The absolute quantities of sherds, of certain and uncertain date, that provide the basis for this chapter (n = 6217). All entries marked with a small 'r' in the main data-base pertain to the ER and MR periods, and are thus included in the relevant period counts.*

Period	Certain	Uncertain
C–HELL	2	0
C–MHELL	5	0
HELL	2	1
HELL–ER	93	41
HELL–MR	349	166
HELL–LR	185	37
MHELL	1	0
M–LHELL	79	4
LHELL	32	43
LHELL–ER	86	26
LHELL–MR	59	15
LHELL–LR	31	2
R–LR	1452	265
ER	90	29
ER–MR	460	217
MR	133	17
MR–LR	374	55
LR	1349	487
LR(/–Ebyz?)	0	14
DIVERS	16	0
Subtotal	4798	1419
*Total**	6217	

At the same time, the supposedly better recognisable classes are held to favour or over-emphasize the ceramic record of certain periods over that of others, in diachronic site reconstructions: these include the Late Roman Amphora 2 (LRA 2 hereafter), or Late Roman ribbed/ridged/grooved/combed (amphorae) body sherds generally (Pettegrew 2007). Some classes of Late Roman pottery are undeniably very easily recognisable; yet one of several aspects that remain largely neglected in the recent methodological discussion is an equally fundamental aspect of ceramic studies, namely fabric differentiation, albeit only macroscopic. In an Aegean context, this most obviously applies to LRA 2. But since, at Thespiai, Late Roman pottery fragments come in significantly larger numbers – 1836 out of a total of 6217 entries here, or *c*. 29.5 per cent, while 295 identified fragments of LRA 2, *c*. 16.1 per cent of the LR total, were identified (figures updated from Poblome *et al*. 2012, table 21.3) – it is not out of the question that sheer quantity could, on its own, overcome our perceptions of recognisability. Even if the combing on LRA 2, covering about one-third of the vessel's body, can be fairly characteristic (see however Slane and Sanders 2005, 286, or this Project's finds from Hyettos), the great range of combing, ribbing, grooving, etc. as surface treatments on body-sherds of Late (and sometimes already on Early or Mid-) Roman amphorae, as well as the wide variety of fabrics in which these amphorae can come to us, *do* not make the classification of (Late) Roman pottery any easier. For Late Hellenistic, Early and Middle Roman pottery also contain classes that are readily recognized: this is by no means true only of such categories as *terra sigillata*.

If the less diagnostic, multi-period material often tends to be disregarded, the normally substantial prevalence of such fragments in survey collections (in the material under study, only just over one-third could be attributed to a *single* period), not to mention the factor of fabric composition, prompts us to take this material also into account, by applying several techniques of redistribution (see below, and Poblome *et al*. 2012b).

Chronology

The chronological framework used in this chapter is that used generally by the Boeotia Project, which fits well enough with the ceramic evidence, and is henceforth abbreviated:

> Hellenistic (HELL) covering from the later fourth century BC to the reign of Augustus;
>
> Early Roman (ER) covering the period from Augustus to AD 200;
>
> Mid-Roman (MR) covering the third and fourth centuries; and
>
> Late Roman (LR) covering the early fifth to about the mid-seventh centuries.

Terminology

Throughout this chapter a number of terms and abbreviations will be used – in addition to the chronological ones just listed – and it is worth emphasizing these, as the intended means for definition and identification. First, all dates are AD unless otherwise stated. Secondly, so as to minimize ceramic jargon while avoiding the repetitive character of naming pottery classes in full, the names of the commonly occurring classes are given in full on their first occurrence in the text, and abbreviated from then on. Late Roman Amphora 1, for example, a common amphora type of Late Antiquity predominantly manufactured in Cilicia and Cyprus, will be abbreviated as LRA 1. Terms such as 'fabric' and 'shape' are applied as follows:

fabric denotes the macroscopically visible clay matrix and its non-clay components (*e.g.* minerals), whereas 'shape' captures and describes the general morphological features of a certain kind of vessel. 'Ware' and 'type'/'form', on the other hand, are applied more rigidly. 'Ware' is used only of a pottery class that has been archaeologically and/or archaeometrically characterized (and published), for example with regard to provenance and typology. African Red Slip Ware (ARSW) is a case in point (Hayes 1972). Type (or form), in fact, pertains to a more or less fixed set of morphological characteristics that refer to a specific shape or vessel that is defined as such. In this way, a type is often part of a ware; for instance, African Red Slip *Ware* (ARSW) includes Hayes '*type*'/'*form*' 97.

The data: quantitative and qualitative dimensions

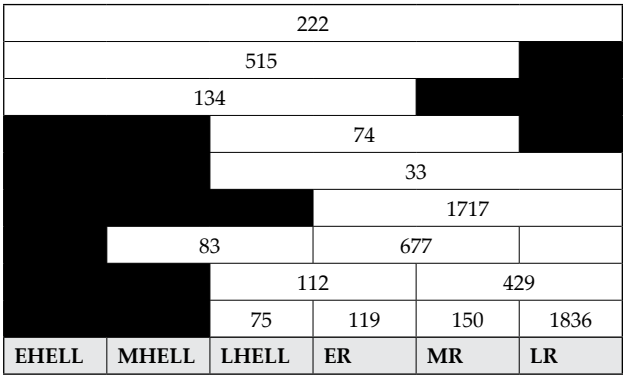
Anticipating the more detailed chronological discussion below, let us first briefly look into the quantity and quality (though these are not mutually exclusive aspects) of the pottery that was re-studied. 'Quantity' should speak for itself, but 'quality' may require some words of clarification. Quality is derived from the kind of fragments found: for example, what vessel parts are represented, how many fragments are datable to a single period, the extent to which fragments can be attributed to a (general) region of origin, etc. Such factors also have their bearing on the methodology and, ultimately, on the interpretation and conclusions and the degree of confidence with which these can be formulated. Both quantity and quality will be explored more fully throughout this chapter.

As mentioned, following the re-study the database currently holds 14,345 individual sherds or entries. Of that total, 6217 fragments (43.3 per cent) were selected for discussion in this chapter. Some 41 pieces out of that number are chronologically assigned either to too broad a period, or to a period that (partly) predates those dealt with here, yet are nevertheless of some relevance for particular parts of this chapter's discussion and interpretation.

Tables 12.3a and 12.3b capture the chronological breakdown, which first of all shows that 2180 fragments (*c.* 35.1 per cent) are attributed to a single period. Numerically, by comparison with the LHELL (1.2 per cent), ER (1.9 per cent) and MR (2.4 per cent) periods, the 1836 fragments (29.5 per cent) assigned to a LR date are particularly notable. Taking the LHELL phase as a basis for the four relevant periods, single-period material occurs in the following ratios: 1:1.6; 1:2; and 1:24.5. The LR period was in fact the last major phase of occupation in the urban zone of Thespiai, and

Tables 3a–b. *3a: Table showing the material by chronological breakdown, in absolute quantities (n = 6217). 3b: A visual representation of the same material.*

Period	n	%
M–LHELL	83	1.3
HELL–ER	134	2.2
HELL–MR	515	8.3
HELL–LR	222	3.6
LHELL	75	1.2
LHELL–ER	112	1.8
ER	119	1.9
ER–MR	677	10.9
MR	150	2.4
MR–LR	429	6.9
LR	1836	29.5
LR(/–EByz?)	14	0.2
R–LR	1717	27.6
LHELL–MR	74	1.2
LHELL–LR	33	0.5
DIVERS	27	0.4
Total	6217	100.0



is the only period that satisfies the threshold of 600 sherds, to allow for a 'reasonable confidence in spatial representation of the original distribution' (Bintliff 2013, 196). Even if it is evident that other periods *are* represented and thus signal occupation or activity, the differences between the different periods, absolute and relative, obstruct a more balanced assessment of, in particular, the pre-LR periods. Thus, were we to limit ourselves to the single-period material alone, *c.* 65 per cent of the available data would be ignored. Such a course can hardly be advocated; so in order to explore the potential of this multi-period material, several methods of redistribution will be employed here, as ways to understand and accommodate it.

Table 12.4 presents absolute and relative quantities, per type of fragment, from several locations. In

Table 12.4. *The material from urban Thespiai compared with that from two excavated contexts (Sagalassos and Limyra, both in Turkey), per type of fragment, in absolute and relative quantities.*

Urban Thespiai			**Sagalassos 2000-117+125**			**Limyra Fundnummer 99**		
Fragment	n	%	Fragment	n	%	Fragment	n	%
R(im)	2025	32.6	R	655	10.9	R	120	12.5
B(ase)	1228	19.8	B	316	5.3	B	43	4.5
H(andle)	824	13.3	H	111	1.9	H	36	3.7
B(ody) S(herd)	2051	33.0	BS	4904	81.9	BS	762	79.3
Unclear	89	1.4						
Total	6217	100.0	*Total*	5986	100.0	*Total*	961	100.0

Table 12.4, as yet unpublished excavation data from Sagalassos and Limyra (both in Turkey) provide a sharp contrast to the almost equal percentages of rims and body sherds within the Thespiai data (cf. Pettegrew 2007, 765–9). The deposit from Sagalassos concerns an 'abandonment assemblage' that was at a later point disturbed (Bes forthcoming c). It was excavated in 2000 in the northernmost room of the Lower Agora's western portico, and activities presumably involved the storage of foodstuffs and the preparation of meals for sale to passers-by. The deposit from Limyra represents a secondary dump of possible domestic material, and was excavated in 2012 amongst architectural remains in the proximity of the city's West Gate.

In both the excavation contexts, however, body sherds comprise around 80 per cent, a percentage that echoes Pettegrew's expectation (2007, 769), leaving up to *c*. 20 per cent for rims, bases and handles. Whereas the life history of a surface assemblage is inevitably more complex, leaving room to imagine that proportions could have ended up differently anyway, our Thespiai data, and the manner in which it was collected, relied more heavily on *morphologically* diagnostic fragments, rims in particular. Even if the Sagalassos and Limyra data do not stem from ideal, high-quality primary deposits, the comparison does imply that the proportions for Thespiai are more distorted. But it is important that the stated methodology of the original Thespiai survey in 1985–86 was to focus collection on what were then seen as the most likely diagnostic finds, 'feature pottery', although body-sherds were also set for gathering on a smaller scale (see Chapter 3, pp. 39–41). There is also an active debate on the added value of larger quantities of body-sherds (compare the experiments by Mark van der Enden, in Bintliff *et al*. 2012, 33–41 and 59–63, with the finds from the urban survey at Koroneia).

The elimination of body sherds from the counts, as was done for the Eastern Korinthia Archaeological Survey (EKAS) data (which are argued to reflect a 'busy countryside' nonetheless, if one that 'boomed' less intensely – Pettegrew 2007), does not produce results comparable with those for Thespiai (as Fig. 12.1 shows). Here, the ratio between the four separate periods is now 1:1.3; 1:1.7; 1:20.3 – not that different from those where body sherds were included. The percentages of rim fragments at Thespiai, however, are now by any standard excessively high. Yet Fig. 12.1 does bear out an important point: with the exception of the MR period (see below), which has the strongest dependence on rim fragments, the proportions of distinctive fragments for the LHELL, ER and LR periods are not so very dissimilar, with the percentage of rims ranging between 40 and 50 per cent, that of bases between 32 and 44 per cent, and that of handles (here with the MR period included) between *c*. 10 and 18 per cent.

Although this may warn us to be wary of their reliability, when looked at from a different perspective these data do generally conform rather well to broader trends. This applies most specifically to the imported pottery: for example, the common appearance of ARSW, the ratio between ARSW and Late Roman C (LRC), and the proportions of some amphora classes, are not radically different from what we observe for Boeotia more generally or for that matter central Greece (Bes forthcoming a, b, d). But given the lack of published excavation data for such multi-period material, the pattern for local and closer regional groups is much more difficult to assess.

In trying to apply Pettegrew's interesting exercise for the Eastern Korinthia, one major methodological obstacle is the different chronological framework that EKAS applies (Pettegrew 2007, 753, n. 35), with MR lacking as a period. For EKAS, ER spans 31 BC to AD 250, while 250 to 700 is all LR. Although the MR period has its inherent problems, as we shall see, it is the authors' conviction that the chronological framework as currently employed by the Boeotia Project should be retained, allowing at least an attempt to pick out the crucial historical MR period.

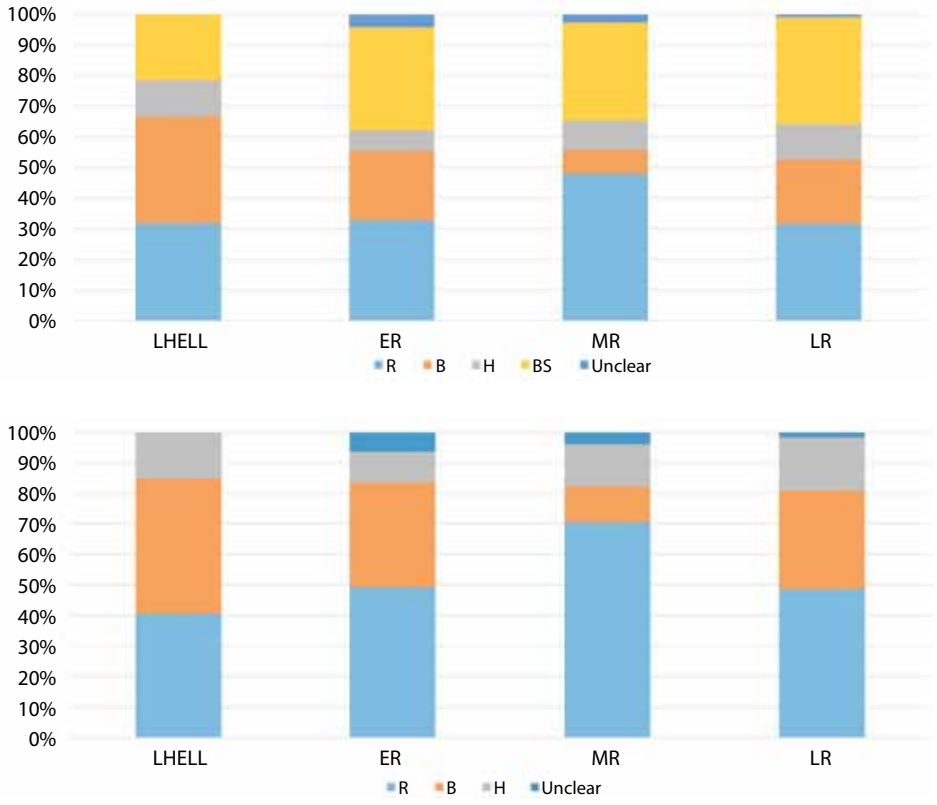


Figure 12.1. *Histograms showing the relative quantities of the Thespiai material, per type of fragment, with the body sherds included (top) and omitted (bottom).*

An outline of ceramic trends

An outline of the major ceramic trends will help in the understanding of the more interpretative parts of this chapter. Let us begin by discussing the class(es) of pottery that are thought to be manufactured locally or in the closer region, that is at one or more places within ancient Thespiai and its surrounding hinterland. Locally made pottery, long overlooked, today receives growing attention. This is important because, as will be shown, such classes often served to cater for the majority of a settlement's ceramic requirements.

Local Manufacture

Although the archaeological evidence for pottery manufacture is restricted to 91 fragments (ranging from over-fired pieces to true 'wasters', which are sometimes warped or bloated), together with a single lamp mould (Table 12.5) – all significant, though not as plentiful as at nearby Koroneia – this is enough to make clear that Thespiai to some degree catered for its own ceramic requirements. None of the wasters could be indisputably given a pre-Roman dating; to a few, only the very general C/HELL–LR date was ascribed. Some 70 wasters fall within the Roman Imperial timeframe; 34 are dated to the LR period, and a portion of the more broadly dated sherds probably belongs to the LR period as well. Even if only a minority could be morphologically identified, by and large these belong to open table-wares – as we see reflected both in the Thespian oxidized and reduced groups (see below), and in some of the varied shapes that are recognized throughout the 'Boeotian' group at Thespiai. One rim + handle fragment resembles LRA 2 (though it is thought unlikely that Thespiai participated in the

Table 12.5. *The material classified as 'production waste', by chronological breakdown, in absolute quantities.*

Date	Quantity	Remark
HELL–MR	1	-
HELL–LR	2	-
LHELL–LR	1	-
R–LR	31	Gouged ware?; 2x triangular rim
ER–MR	2	-
MR	2	2x incurving rim dish
MR-LR	1	-
LR	34	2x base; 1x torsed handle; 1x rim cf. LRA 2; 1x triangular rim cf. Koroneia; 1x almond-shaped rim
Unknown	17	1x base
Total	91	

broader vogue of LRA 2 manufacture); while another sherd, possibly a fourth- to fifth-century gouged jug of a type well known from Athens (Hayes 2008, 93), showed that small(er) and large(r) closed shapes were manufactured as well (Fig. 12.2a below). In fact, fragments of gouged jugs are relatively common amongst the Boeotian group; this, together with some clear evidence for production from Koroneia (Fig. 12.5 below), suggests that gouged jugs were fairly popular in Boeotia, and thus could well have belonged to Thespiai's manufacturing repertoire as well.

This modest yet clear evidence for pottery manufacturing activities can be substantiated by two fabric groups, defined by us as local or from the closer region. Admittedly, in the absence of firm archaeological clues (kilns, workshops, *etc*.) and of archaeometrical analyses, our claim for these groups to be considered 'local' relies solely on the actual fragments. That said, however, the origin of the clay(s) used can be predicted to have been within a range of roughly 5 km (Arnold 1989, 32–57, esp. 38–51, fig. 2.5; see also Shiel and Stewart 2007, 98, fig. 7.2). To support the claim, we can point to as many as 485 fragments that share fabric and finish characteristics, along with certain shapes that are echoed in some of the wasters. To cite Willet:

> '[t]he fabric has a fine granulation and commonly inclusions are present, mostly consisting of grit and rarely lime. As for the Thespian fabric, the granulation of the clay-particles could not be more clearly determined with eyesight, except that they are smaller than 50 μm. Pores are very common. In the reduced fired pieces, the pores seem slightly more numerous. These are mostly rounded and measuring between 50–75 μm or smaller, although larger elongated pores of up to 210 μm are observed as well, especially in the reduced fired pieces. Inclusions commonly include sand/quartz-like grit of dark brown to yellowish colour (ranging mostly 50–105 μm), which are evenly distributed, and rarely tiny bits of lime (mostly <75 μm). The reduced variety seems to have slightly more grit inclusions and occasionally larger lime inclusions are visible (sometimes up to <300 μm). Very few mica particles can occasionally be observed in direct sunlight on smoothed surfaces and/or on the break. Both size and quantity of these inclusions indicate a natural source, rather than the addition of temper to or the preparation of the clay. The colour of the unreduced variety of the fabric is red to light red-reddish yellow with an orange-red to brownish-red thin slip. The reduced fired variety has a yellowish brown to brown, with occasional light orange to buff sections, with a thin brownish, brown-greyish to greyish slip layer. The hardness of the fabric is 4 on the mineral scale (*i.e*. can be scratched by window glass, not by a copper coin). The feel of the fabric is sandy to smooth and the fractures are smooth. The inclusions are evenly sorted' (Willet 2012, 99).

Two groups can thus be distinguished in this material – an oxidized (n=58) and a reduced (n=210) group, with 217 fragments being unclear or intermediate, This is presumably a single fabric cluster, within which a restricted functional range of open (bowls, dishes) and closed (jugs) tablewares are the most popular (n=219). Also recognized were basins (n=29), jars/amphorae (n=15), beehives (n=5) and a small variety of other shapes (three flagons, an *unguentarium*, an oil lamp and a storage bin); the remainder could not be morphologically identified. What is interesting is the clear evidence for a local ceramic industry, which must have begun in the MR period if not before, but for which the LR evidence is comparatively the strongest – at roughly the time when the *Kastro* was the main settlement focus (compare Chapter 3, pp. 119–20).

Thespiai is no exception within Boeotia when it comes to the local or closer regional manufacture of pottery within Boeotia. Most convincing is the evidence from Koroneia where, besides moulds and abundant wasters, even fragments of kiln infrastructure were identified. A cluster of anomalies revealed in recent geophysical prospection, in one of the areas where such kiln remains were found, are believed to be pottery kilns (Eastern Atlas Geophysics Team, unpublished report 2015). Most interesting in the cases of Thespiai, Koroneia, Tanagra, and also Askra, is that each city's ceramic repertoire presents both individual forms and traits, and a number of morphological and decorative characteristics shared with one or more of the other Boeotian towns (Poblome *et al*. 2012a, 397). The evidence for local manufacture at Hyettos in northern Boeotia is less explicit, as only a very limited number of wasters was identified; but the presence of (local) magnetite particles, presumably added as temper, in some of the pottery recovered at the site, suggests a local production infrastructure that was mostly focused on basins and tiles. On the other hand, closed and open table-wares at Hyettos were, for the R–LR period at least, to a large extent drawn from Koroneia (see p. 325).

Individual traits need not reflect a strictly indigenous development, either locally or regionally; an alternative explanation would be that inspiration

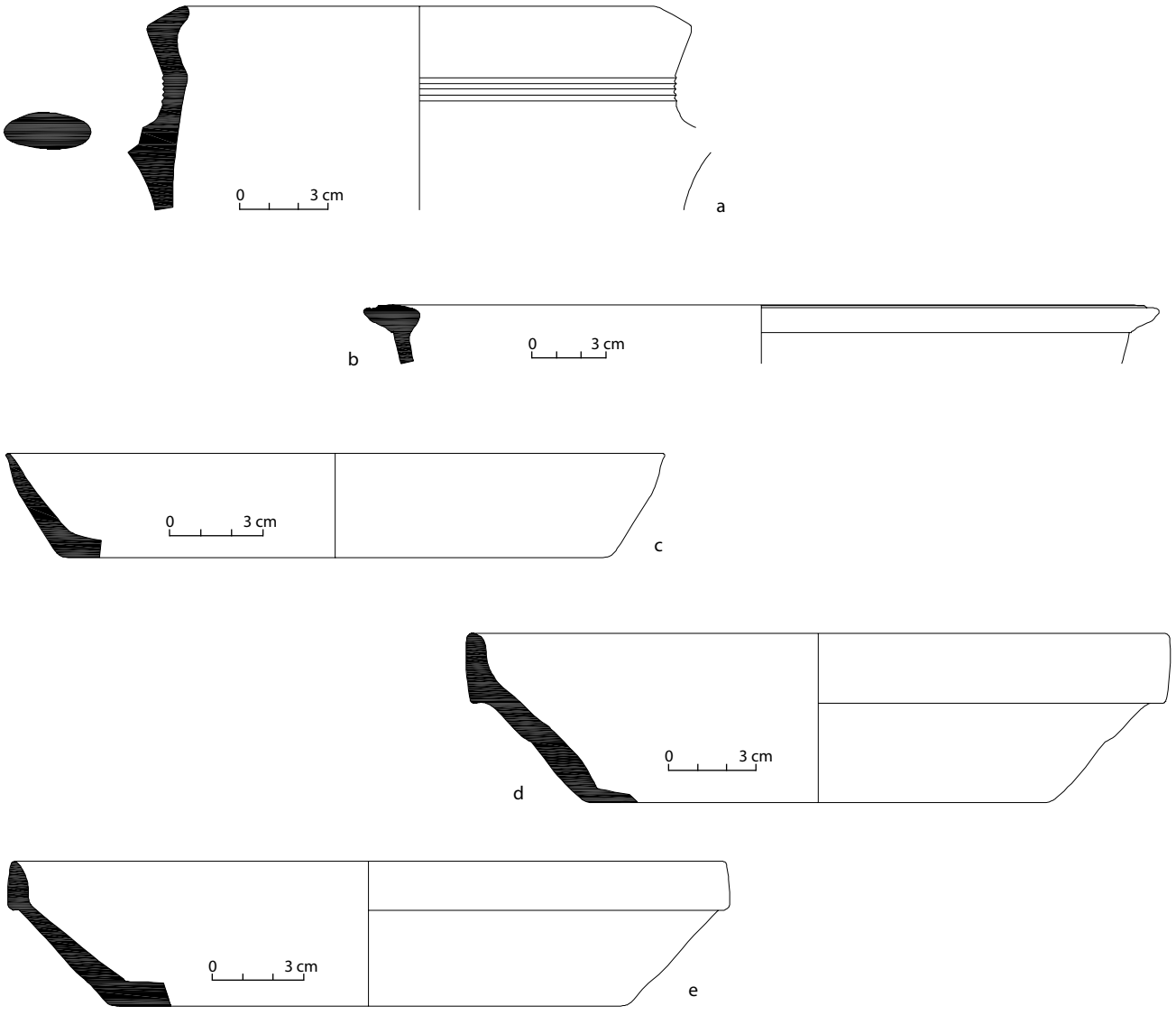


Figure 12.2a–e. *Profile drawings of pieces in the presumed local or close regional Thespian fabric: (a) Roman-period (?LR) jar/amphora; (b) bowl of probable LR date in the same; (c) dish of MR date; (d) and (e) two dishes of ER–MR date.*

found its way through one or more other channels, whether geographical, or in other materials no longer archaeologically visible, or through stylistic merging to produce something 'new'. Equally, the understanding of the shapes and decorative styles which can also be recognized elsewhere in Boeotia, is not at all straightforward. The whole field of association, relationship and dependence, as between morphologically similar shapes – whether for instance one shape was directly or indirectly inspired by the other, often involving a major (imported) table-ware category, or through one or more different material media – all this remains a challenging topic. Such relationships can have a number of implications with regard to knowledge, exchange, the local socio-cultural and artisanal climate, and so on (for Boeotia, this is explored more fully in Willet 2012). In any case such relationships, when they existed, did not necessarily follow linear paths (Willet 2012); they are perhaps best defined as a ceramic *koinè* (Poblome and Fırat 2011; Zelle 2014). This applies particularly to (open) table-wares (Fig. 12.2b below) and (smaller) closed vessels. A comprehensive discussion would be out of place here: suffice to say that some of the commoner rim profiles at Thespiai can be also recognized elsewhere in Boeotia, in local or closer regional fabrics. We assume that Thebes was at least to some extent part of this *koinè*.

These open table-wares include the incurving rim dish, the plain angled straight-wall dish (Fig. 12.2c), and the dish with off-set rim (Fig. 12.2d–e), for which we can find parallels in, respectively, ARSW (Hayes 1972, 67–9, 107–9, figs 12, 18, forms 49 and 62, possibly even as simplified versions of form 61: Hayes 1972, 100–7, figs 16–17); ARSW (Hayes 1972, 69–73, fig. 12, form 50), and later ESB (Ladstätter 2010, 190, n. 220) and Athenian/Attic products (Grigoropoulos 2009, 414–15, 436–7, 459–60, nos 56–63, 67; in Hayes 1972, 407–8, 2008, 442, fig. 7, 2010, 25, 31, fig. 7, of third-fourth century date; in Reynolds 2004, 225, 247, fig. 13.17 (possibly late fourth century); and in Robinson 1959, 61–3, pls. 12, 37, nos K 20–2, K 24–5, K 27: 'common in third century, pre-Herulian fills'). The plain angled straight-wall dish might even recall 'parallels' from what is now north-eastern Serbia, dated to the ER period (Jeremić 2009, 102–3, fig. 54, type III/4). Though this is admittedly a 'simple' shape, it underscores some of the methodological problems that arise in pin-pointing morphological parallels: it hints, if only implicitly, at a direction from which the source of inspiration can be sought, and this in turn relates to a framework of exchanging goods and ideas.

Morphological inspiration may still have been drawn, directly or indirectly, drawn from both western and Greek/Aegean sources. Without exception, these rim profiles are combined with flat bases and with partially applied, multi-coloured or mottled slips (sometimes amounting to more of a wash), during the MR and LR periods especially. These features are invariably found elsewhere in Boeotia too, most notably at Koroneia. At the same time, shapes that are more site-specific appear at Thespiai with some frequency.

Returning to the local, Thespian series of (open) table-wares, the lack of controlled and published stratigraphic excavations – something which in fact applies to Boeotia more generally – hinders the construction of clear typological and chronological frameworks based on internal evidence, and compels us to resort to external parallels. This involves two inherent methodological considerations as, too often, parallels are named too easily little or no regard for wider implications – which is not to say that no association existed. First, from a Boeotian point of view one easily makes a transition to Athens and Corinth, two sites already at considerable distances, that did not follow the same paths morphologically. Secondly, the clues suggesting that Boeotia had, to some extent, its own regional ceramic logic should warn us against looking for parallels too often and too far away; we may simply acknowledge that towns may have had their own developments, drawing inspiration from, or merging together, elements from sources we can no longer recognize or identify. Nonetheless, some of the commoner shapes at Thespiai resemble 'external' shapes too closely for us to deny some sort of morphological, and with it a chronological connection, of any kind.

In fact, following up such connections seems to result in tying together a wider regional tradition that comprises Boeotia, eastern Phokis (Delphi, Elateia), Corinth and Athens, possibly stretching as far west as Brindisi (De Mitri 2013, 10–11, figs 10–11): this applies particularly to fairly simple dishes that recall ARSW (Hayes forms 50 and 62). Another feature is decorative: the single crosses that are incised or stamped in the centre of dishes, a LR characteristic that can be found on ARSW and LRC, as well as on 'Askra Ware' (Hayes 2008, 94) (Fig. 12.3a–c). Similarly, (LR) oil lamps from Boeotia also betray morphological and/or decorative features that suggest an extra-regional inspiration. Here, as elsewhere, shapes and motifs can be recognized that are also found on oil lamps manufactured in Tunisia, such as palm branches (*e.g.* Bonifay 2004, 360, fig. 202a, type Atlante VIII; see also Slane and Sanders 2005, 266, 269, fig. 10, nos. 3-1, 3-2), and also the row of (alternating) motifs on both sides of the central disc (Bonifay 2004, 361, fig. 202b, type Atlante X).

Pottery of closer regional origin

Besides the strictly local ceramics, Thespiai was also firmly anchored within ceramic supply networks whose products originate both in Boeotia and in central Greece more widely. From sources relatively nearby, we can recognize products from Tanagra (n=2), Askra (n=10) and especially Koroneia (n=53). Most of the identified fragments are typologically familiar (open table-wares, smaller closed shapes), though the single beehive and oil lamp in Koroneia fabric are interesting additions. We can thus observe a modest level of intra-regional circulation of ceramic products associated with the various urban sites surveyed by the Boeotia Project, usually of an order ranging from a few to no more than a few dozen fragments. Hyettos In particular, with the rural sites in its *chora*, appears to have depended on a range of shapes that were manufactured at Koroneia, mostly if not exclusively during the Roman Imperial period. No actual products from Delphi (Petrídis 2010) were recognized, nor from Phokian Elateia, some 50 km northwest of Thespiai. Yet, interestingly open and closed shapes can be recognized in the local, albeit fairly limited, Elateian repertoire that readily match some of the Thespian and Koroneian shapes. This prompts us to include also Elateia in this ceramic *koinè* (Kouzeli and Zachos 2000). Other places too were surely actively involved in pottery production during the R–LR period, and their products may have seen some circulation within

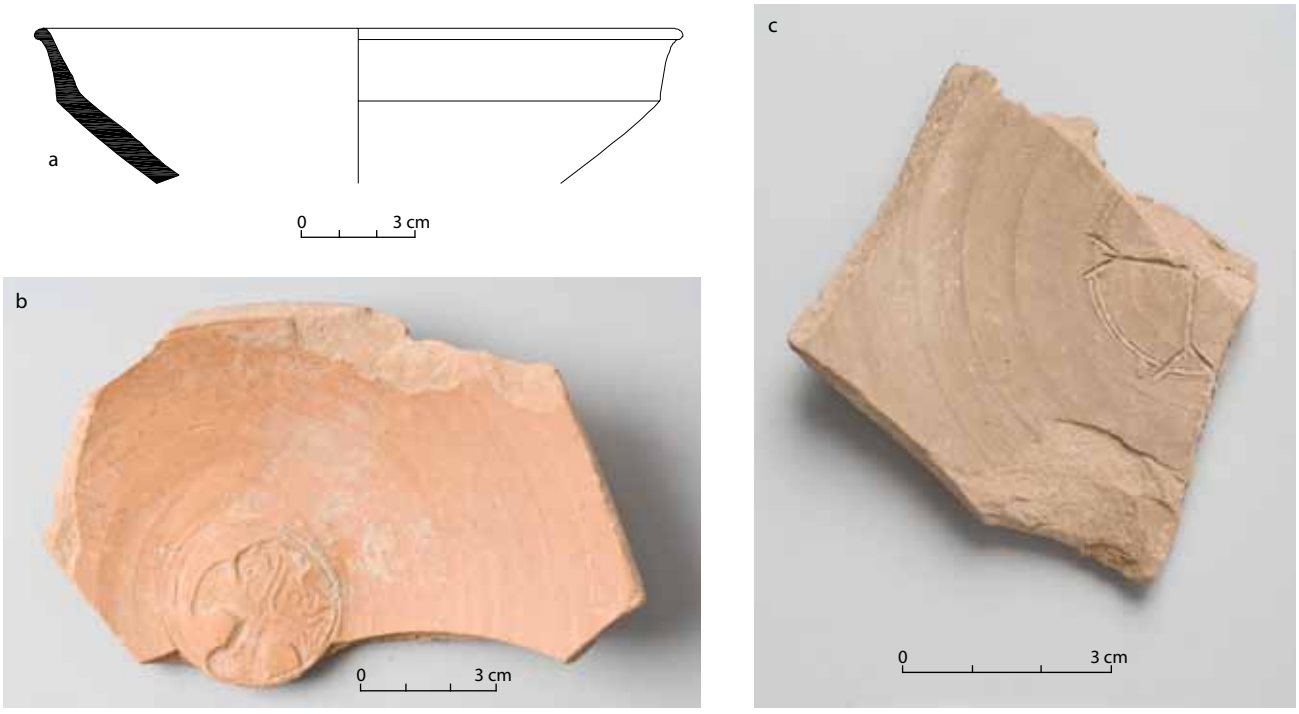


Figure 12.3a–c. *(a) Profile drawing of dish of MR–LR date, presumably in 'Askra Ware'; (b) Interior of bowl or dish of MR–LR date, of presumed regional manufacture, with stamped cross with splayed ends at centre. Note the ω under the left arm of the cross and (?) A under the right, where the normal pattern is the reverse, showing that the piece is illustrated upside down; (c) interior of bowl or dish of LR date, possibly in 'Askra Ware', with incised cross with played ends at centre.*

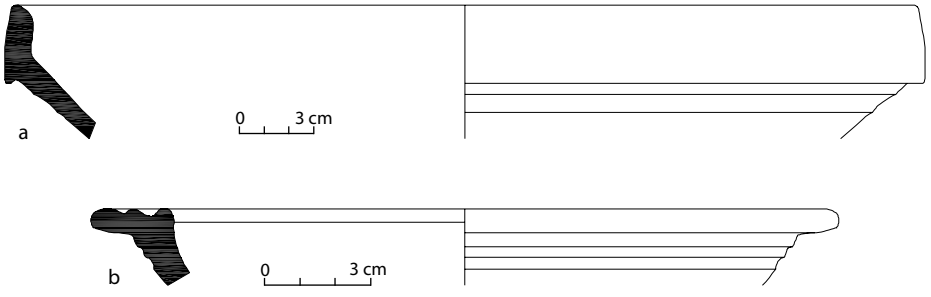


Figure 12.4a–b. *Profile drawings of pieces of Athenian/Attic manufacture: (a) dish of roughly MR date; (b) dish of MR–LR date.*

Boeotia. Yet in general it appears that this part of central Greece was strongly focused on ceramic self-sufficiency, though not exclusively so; and that at the same time a fairly wide area absorbed morphological and decorative styles that probably originated from beyond this region. Tanagra was perhaps relatively better oriented towards other spheres of interaction, for both 'inspiration' and actual products; its port at Delion basically faced eastwards. There may in fact be clues pointing to a partial distinction between eastern Boeotia (with Attika) and western Boeotia (with eastern Phokis).

From further afield, small quantities coming from Athens/Attika (a handful of open table-wares) (Fig. 12.4a–b) and from Corinth (three oil lamps) can be recognized.

But there is now firm evidence that the gouged jugs (eight fragments), so characteristic for fourth- and fifth-century Athens and Attika, were also produced at Koroneia (Fig. 12.5), probably at Thespiai, and

Figure 12.5. *Over-fired and warped fragments of gouged jugs of fourth- and fifth-century date from Koroneia, in local Koroneian fabric.*

perhaps at other places in Boeotia. This casts some doubt on assuming an exclusively Athenian origin for our fragments.

To an important group, finally (n=1004), a generally Boeotian provenance was at first attributed. Here, the past decade has been highly instructive in familiarizing us, macroscopically, with the different fabric(s) associated with various Boeotian sites. These fragments fairly closely resemble the Thespian fabric group, yet present features (colour, feel, inclusions, surface finish) which do not fully match. Their identification as Boeotian is strengthened by their morphological repertoire (in so far as this could be determined), including shapes that are typical for Thespiai and in part for Boeotia more generally. In the event, we assume that a substantial portion of this group does in fact derive from Thespiai itself, thereby increasing substantially the proportion of local manufacture and bringing it more into line with the other Boeotian cities – Tanagra possibly excepted (Bes forthcoming b). As a result, the output of the Thespian workshops would become more varied and substantial than can be currently ascertained. In terms of shapes, the majority of the group consists of open and closed table-wares (Fig. 12.6a–d), as well as jars/amphorae, beehives and oil lamps, which again suggests that Thespiai, to an important extent, catered for such basic requirements itself, or else procured the material from nearby sources (compare Pickersgill and Roberts 2003, in respect of Sparta).

Most of the Boeotian cooking wares remain elusive as to their provenance. While a small fraction can be classified as identifiable imports, the majority can be separated into two major categories: the oxidized and the reduced, with medium-sized whitish-greyish grit common to both. The latter group, our 'grey gritty', seems to be mostly MR and/or LR in date. Though some of the shapes have features in common with specimens at Corinth – something that is clearer for the LR period – this is not true, Interestingly, for the macroscopically determined fabrics; nor is the Boeotian picture readily recalled in the R–LR surface pottery from the region around Patras, nor in the excavated LR material from Naupaktos, nor perhaps that from the North-West Greek area more generally. In terms of table- and cooking wares, at least, Boeotia seems to have partly followed an internal, regional logic. This finds further support in the evidence from (LR) Delphi and Eretria: visits by Pláton Petrídis (École française, Delphi team), as well as Guy Ackermann and Simone Zurbriggen (Swiss School, Eretria) and a study visit by the first author to the Corinth storerooms brought to light no clear connection with the *Boeotian* cooking wares specifically (except for the

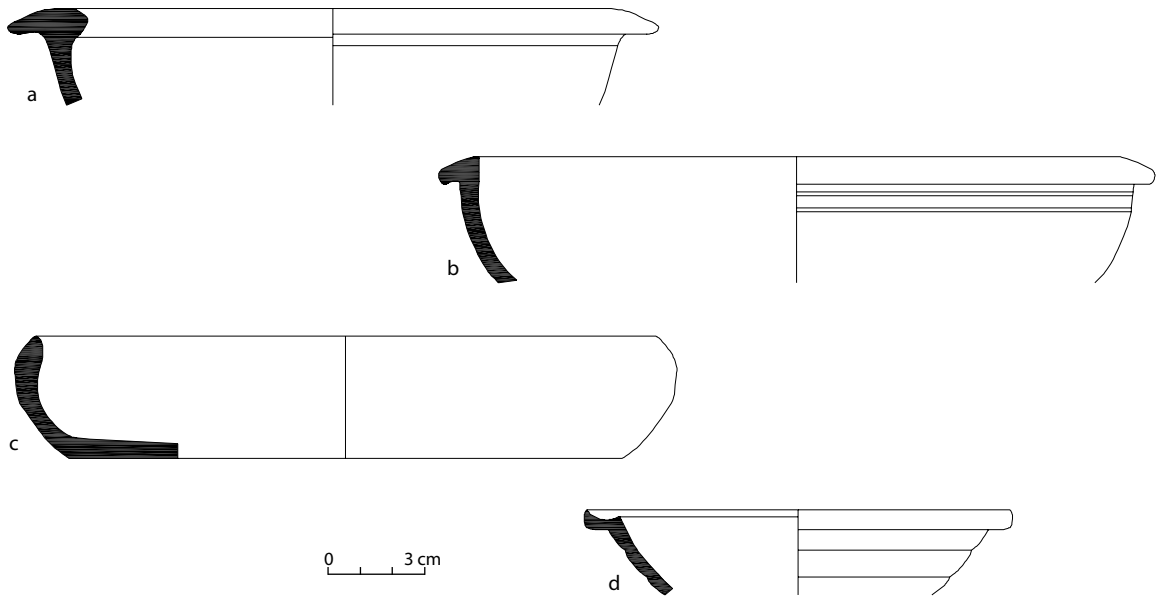


Figure 12.6a–d. *Profile drawings of pieces in a presumed Boeotian fabric: (a) and (b) two bowls of Roman date; (c) dish of probable MR date; (d) dish of Roman date.*

known imported categories). This could lead a tentative suggestion that the provenance of these cooking wares should be sought within Boeotia proper – or at least in its closest neighbouring zones. Any role played by Euboean-made pottery in Boeotian supply remains unknown, though Eretria and Tanagra (in eastern Boeotia) do share what appears to be the same or a similar fabric (group), used for utilitarian wares (Guy Ackermann, *pers. comm.*), recalling the much earlier tentative connections between Lefkandi and Oropos (Mazarakis Ainian and Vlachou 2014).

Supra-Regional Pottery

A wide variety of imported categories can be recognized in addition to the pottery from local and closer regional sources. These are discussed more fully elsewhere (Bes forthcoming b), but it will serve the general purpose to highlight the major types and trends here. Boeotia may look an unlikely candidate for the role of a major commercial hub in Greece, still less for the central Mediterranean generally; yet the data for Thespiai, as well as that gathered elsewhere by the Boeotia Project (most notably at Tanagra) do not support Pettegrew's claim that Boeotia 'is not geographically or commercially advantaged' (Pettegrew 2007, 776). Let us consider the evidence by period.

HELL–ER. Whereas HELL table-wares and other functional classes are discussed elsewhere (Chapter 11), there are 66 fragments from various classes of Aegean amphorae, spanning the HELL and/or ER periods (the great difficulties presented by the chronological identification of survey pottery need not be re-emphasized here). Some 36 fragments are Knidian (Bezeczky 2013, 53–6; Koehler and Wallace Matheson 2004, 167), a predominance that is reflected throughout Boeotia. The typologically identified Cretan fragments, including a probable handle of type AC4/Dressel 43 (Marangou-Lerat 1995, 84–9, 116–20, plates 19–21), do not predate the Augustan period (Marangou-Lerat 1995, 67–89). Throughout the Roman Imperial period, in fact, Aegean pottery – including that from sources within Greece – dominates the imported ceramic landscape. To the ER period also belong single examples of Knossos Types 41 and 43 (Hayes 1983, 156–7, fig. 26). From further afield come rare specimens of the Agora M54, a type that is strikingly common at Tanagra, as well as a handful of other Cilician double-barreled handle fragments that can be more generically attributed to the Dressel 2–4/Agora G198/Pompeii 13 family (Robinson 1959, 89 plate 19; Reynolds 2005, 564–5; Bezeczky 2013, 81–2). Western amphorae are represented by specimens from the Italian peninsula and the Adriatic: Campanian Dressel 1 and Dressel 2–4, Tyrrhenian Dressel 1; and Dressel 1 and Dressel 6 and/or Lamboglia 2 from the Adriatic (Bezeczky 2013, 100–10, 114–23, 129–33). Amphorae from the Iberian peninsula are rare, yet they include a large Beltrán IIA fragment (Fig. 12.7) (Bezeczky 2013, 146–7), and a handle possibly of a Dressel 23.

Imported table-wares of the LHELL and/or ER period are not common: ITS (Fig. 12.8a–b) stands out, next to a token presence of the Eastern Sigillatae series (Bes forthcoming a).

This is supplemented by rare imported pieces in thin-walled ware (a single fragment of imported lead-glazed ware has been recognized in the rural survey), as well as fragments of unidentified classes of *terra sigillata* that need not be Boeotian. At the same time, locally manufactured table-wares of this period remain poorly identified: this fits the overall picture, in contrast to the MR, but above all the LR period. Perhaps Thespiai drew table-wares from (regional) sources that differed from those used in the MR and/or LR period and, given their comparatively small quantities, are not recognized as such. Finally, rare imported cooking wares are represented by a Campanian Pompeian Red Ware dish (Slane 1986, 312; Johnson 2008, 117–18), and an Adriatic *mortarium* (originally identified by John Hayes). When we move more securely into the Roman period, imported amphorae include a probable Dressel 24 (Auriemma and Quiri 2004, 49–50; Opaiţ and Tsaravopoulos 2011). In the absence of typological clues, however, we may suppose that one or more of the Tripolitanian and Tunisian amphorae fragments belong to this period; rare examples of pre-LR types have in fact been identified elsewhere in Boeotia (e.g. a Tripolitanian I rim at Koroneia), and recent research into shipwrecks in the southern Euboean Gulf supports this idea (Koutsouflakis *et al*. 2012, wrecks 2 and 10, esp. 58, fig. 27), which is obviously of wider significance too.

MR. The third (and fourth) centuries witnessed the first substantial influx of ARSW (Bes 2015, Chapters 3–4) – mostly in C-fabrics and largely represented by Hayes form 50 (Martin 1999, 242–4), a form now thought to continue well into the fifth century (Slane and Sanders 2005, 283, there in D fabric (248, n. 15)). This is also the time when Thespian wares become more prominent, or at least better understood in typo-chronological terms (Willet 2012, 96–120); the three shapes mentioned earlier (p. 17) are placed in the MR period. The occasional arrival of Corinthian oil lamps could have begun perhaps even as early as the second century, or in the ER period more generally (Perlzweig 1961; Pétridis 2011). Also recognized, in a handful of fragments, is what appears to be Corinthian cooking fabric (C.c.f.), of more generally Roman date, which could originate from Methana (Slane and Sanders 2005, 248–9, n. 15). Kapitän II amphora fragments are not uncommon (Bezeczky 2013, 149–51; Slane 2004, 364–5), whose date range in fact extends beyond the MR period with which it is traditionally associated. Their source remains unresolved (though some seem to have been manufactured in the wider Ephesos-Maeander Valley region). The same applies to the Zeest 80 (two fragments) (Bezeczky 2013, 173–4; Swan 2007, 256, 258, fig. 2.19; Reynolds 2010, 90–1). Macroscopic similarities (including the grey core) between these two types (Reynolds 2010, 90; Auriemma and Quiri 2004, 52) were also observed at Tanagra and Hyettos. Finally, two fragments of Tunisian cooking lids were noted, broadly MR in date, one originally identified by John Hayes, of his form 195; Hayes 1972, 208.

LR. The LR pottery provides the clearest and most abundant signal for (urban) occupation and activity. This is reflected in the significant appearance of LRA 2, from a variety of Aegean sources; even without checking every fragment, it is clear that neither the Argolid fabric nor the micaceous fabrics are common (Slane and Sanders 2005, 287, nos. 64–5; Pieri 2005, 92; but see Reynolds 2010, 96). The latter occur more commonly elsewhere in Boeotia and central Greece (Pieri 2005, 85–93, esp. 92); while part of the Orange Micaceous group from Tanagra (Willet 2012, 67) definitely contains significant LRA 2 (Karambinis and Bes forthcoming). Also recognized was the hard and dense, lime-rich LRA 2 fabric that dominates at Hyettos, whose morphological traits suggest that it falls early in the type range, and which moreover lacks the classic 'combing', with rounded ribbing instead.

The original notion that Tanagra, where for example the Argolid fabric is more common, was a 'trap' for LR amphorae more generally must now be down-played. Preliminary figures suggest nothing exceptional, at least by comparison with coastal and near-coastal towns well connected to major shipping routes. Although (early) LRA 2 was manufactured at nearby Delion, Tanagra's harbour, along with other amphora types and utilitarian shapes such as basins (Gerousi 2014), a preliminary check of part of the Tanagra data suggests that the Delion products were hardly reaching the city itself, which is only some 10 km distant. This seems somewhat surprising; yet, if corroborated by further study, it strengthens our current hypothesis that the Delion amphorae were mainly intended for the export of regional agricultural surpluses, a hypothesis originally put forward specifically for LRA 2 (Poblome *et al*. 2012a, 395; Karagiorgou 2001). Furthermore, the variety in the amphora shapes made at Delion, though limited, could suggest some differentiation in their content.

Late Roman Amphora 3 (LRA 3) only occasionally penetrated these parts of Boeotia (Pieri 2005, 94–101). Even rarer are two Sinopean fragments (Kassab Tezgör 2010, 123). Three *spatheia* pieces – one

Figure 12.7. *External view of rim-fragment of a Beltran IIA amphora with handle-stump, of ER date, an import from southern Spain.*

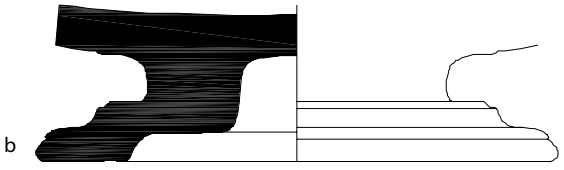


Figure 12.8a–b. *Interior view (a) and profile drawing (b) of a chalice of ER date, in Italian Terra Sigillata (ITS).*

complete top belonging to Bonifay's Type 33 variante A (Fig. 12.9a–b) (Bonifay 2004, 124–9; 127–9 (Spatheion 3), *c.* 575–650/700) – together with a single Keay 62 (Bonifay 2004, 137–40) from central North Africa, represent the only typologically identifiable western imports for this period. The trickle of eastern imports is mostly made up by the 'usual suspects': Late Roman Amphora 1 (LRA 1), 4 (LRA 4) and 5 (LRA 5) (Pieri 2005, 69–85; 101–14; 114–27 respectively). Also from Thespiai comes the only Late Roman Amphora 7 (LRA 7) fragment so far attested in Boeotia (Pieri 2005, 128–32: the fabric conforms well to Pieri's description of Middle Nile Valley products).

ARSW still strongly dominated the import of table-wares (Bes 2015, Chapters 5–6); LRC arrived in smaller quantities, and whilst most originate from Phokaia, five fragments are attributed to other sources (Hayes 1972, 323–70; Hayes 2008, 83; Vaag 2005). Local and/or closer regional vessels nonetheless dominate the table-ware spectrum, though a few further exceptions can be noted. From central Greece are recognized some Athenian/Attic imports (identified by John Hayes), which are generally datable to the MR to LR period (Hayes 1972, 407–8). Further recognized is a single example of Macedonian Grey Ware (Hayes 2008, 90–1), as well as four fragments of a characteristic, but as yet unprovenanced class of tableware (Fig. 12.10a–b, from Tanagra).

The (limited) morphological variety leaves little doubt that these belong to LR: they mostly consist of wide, shallow plates, not unlike ARSW Hayes form 104–105, yet rim profiles can also be reminiscent of CRSW/Late Roman D. Traces of brown paint (or painted slip?) are observed on one fragment, and a drop on another. These form a relatively common group at Tanagra (Bes forthcoming b; Willet 2012, 79–80). Although they are presumed to be local to Tanagra, macroscopic properties, as well as the manner in which they break, suggest otherwise. Vessels in the same or similar fabric, may have been found at Argos, Antikythera (Quercia *et al*. 2011, 70–1, fig. 4, no. 28, with further parallels) and possibly Athens (Grigoropoulos 2009, 440, 462, no. 91), which suggests that similar shapes, possibly in the same fabric, enjoyed a wide distribution. At Argos they are found

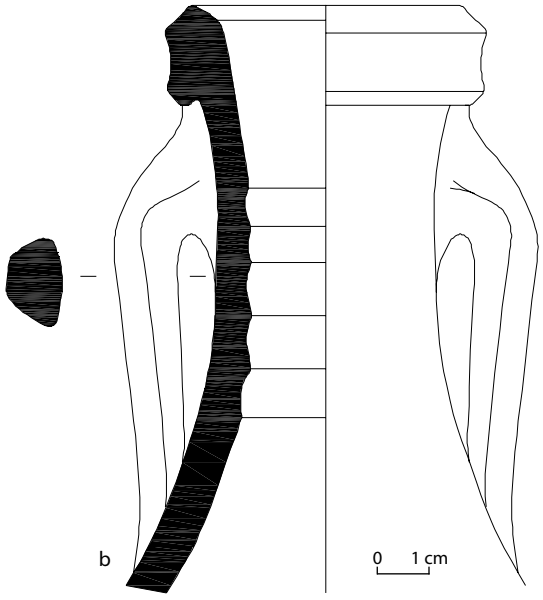


Figure 12.9a–b. *View of upper part (a) and profile drawing (b) of a* spatheion *of Bonifay Type 33A, of LR date, an import from Tunisia.*

Figure 12.10a–b. *Exterior (a) and interior (b) views of rim-fragments of an unprovenanced category of LR table-ware, found at Tanagra.*

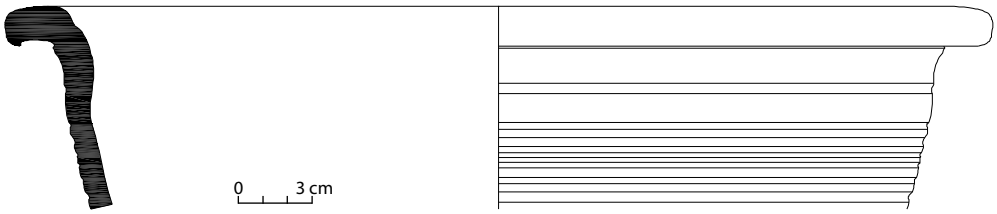


Figure 12.11. *Profile drawing of a basin, of roughly MR–LR date.*

fragments from Tanagra (Quatember *et al*. 2008, 284, 298, nos 72–3, 313, fig. 19; Ladstätter 2010, 102; Ladstätter and High 2010, 171, K 783, Taf. 217), dated 'spätantik/frühbyzantinisch' (seventh century) and termed 'Mäandertalsigillata' (see Ladstätter 2008, 142, Taf. 297, K 237, for a sixth- and early seventh-century date). The fabric, however, does not favour an Ephesian/Maeander Valley provenance. One further possibility that has been carefully considered for at least a part of this class – in particular the two (joining) fragments on the right in Fig. 12.10a–b – is that it represents a Central Greek Painted Ware originating in Thessaly, and more specifically at Nea Anchialos (Pétridis 2009 and *pers. comm*.). Only further study can clarify this.

LR micaceous Aegean Ware is uncommon at Thespiai, especially by comparison to Tanagra and Hyettos (Slane and Sanders 2005, 255–6, n. 21; also 287 n. 71). Most rims that are found at Boeotian sites resemble their fig. 3.1–28 (252; see also Abadie-Reynal 2007, 220–1, fig. 58, 372.1). Their date range spans the fourth and fifth centuries, and even if a (small?) part of this class may thus predate the LR period, this would have little effect on our impression of the major lines of import. Finally of interest are some utilitarian vessels (basins, but also some jugs) that recall certain categories of LRA 2 in appearance (Pieri 2005, 92, fig. 51 right) (Fig. 12.11). Such vessels are recognized elsewhere in Boeotia, as well as for instance at Corinth (Slane and Sanders 2005, *passim*, esp. 288, n. 79); morphologically, and perhaps also in their fabric, they also bring to mind basins from Crete (Yangaki 2005, 156–9, 468, 470, plates X.2, XII.4). The fabric of most fragments identified, however, does not recall the lime-and-mica LRA 2 fabric presumed to be from the Argolid; at Thespiai and elsewhere in Boeotia, they have a rather soft feel and, colour-wise, mostly come in pastel hues. Corinth offers a good morphological parallel (Slane 1994, 146, 149, plate 34.58) – the rim in particular – which suggests that such shapes had appeared already by the later third century, and thus that not all specimens identified at Thespiai are strictly LR. Slane's 'buff fabric' may possibly recall the fabric found in most of the fragments from Boeotia.

Table 12.6 and Fig. 12.12 together record the percentages for the pottery with *identified* provenance (n= 2424), and clearly show that *c*. 61 per cent of the pottery found at Thespiai was manufactured in and around Thespiai, or within Boeotia more generally; if the radius is extended to 60–70 km, this proportion rises to nearly 74 per cent. Were the Aegean segment to be added, this would mean that *c*. 90 per cent of Thespiai's identified pottery was manufactured within the general Greek and Aegean areas, with only about 9.5 per cent originating from beyond. Following the same logic, *c*. 26 per cent could be considered, in relative terms, longer-distance imports – that is, with the 'Aegean' and 'Beyond' columns combined (though see Hayes 2000, 106–7, cited in Pettegrew 2007, 776, n. 95). It seems safe to suppose, provisionally, that of the provenance-*unidentified* pottery (n= 4317, or *c*. 64 per cent), a comparable share (another 70 per cent or so?) is of 'regional' origin as well. So the tentative conclusion would be that at least 70 per cent of the pottery recovered from the surface at Thespiai, over the whole period from (HELL–) LHELL to LR, was drawn from sources within a radius of no more than 60–70 km. An explanation for the fact that local and closer regional products are hardly recognized prior to the MR–LR period need not be sought only in the restricted volume of finds and the, related, overwhelming dominance of LR pottery. As the presumed local Thespian fabric(s) – those up to within the 'Boeotian' range – are relatively easy to identify macroscopically, possibly the production remained too limited to leave a mark, or a different clay or clays were used that were not recognized as such.

The pottery from beyond this Greek and Aegean zone mostly comprised amphorae and table-wares, with cooking wares and other categories playing a much smaller part (Table 12.7).

Table 12.6. *The Roman-period pottery classified by provenance, in absolute and relative quantities.*

Provenance	n	%
Thespiai	485	20.0
Boeotia	1004	41.4
(Central) Greece	298	12.3
Aegean	409	16.9
Beyond	228	9.4
Total (Uniden. n=3,793)	2424	100.0

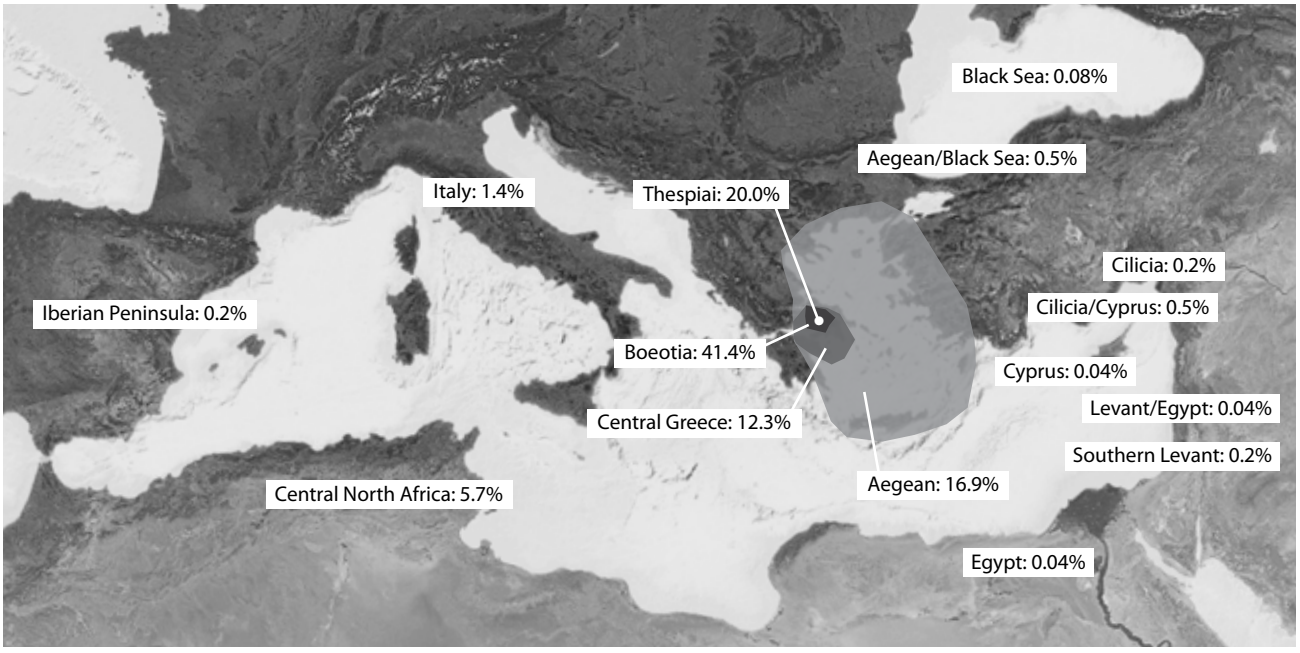


Figure 12.12. *Map showing the provenance of the Roman-period pottery by general provenance, in relative quantities.*

Although these originate from nearly all round the Mediterranean, there is a clear prevalence of western products (82.5 per cent) over eastern and Pontic sources (17.5 per cent). At Boeotian Koroneia, interestingly, preliminary calculations suggest that the locally produced table-wares, over this entire LHELL–LR period, account for at least *c*. 85 per cent of the sample studied thus far, with the workshops' repertoire comprising basically every functional category, except cooking wares.

In summary, Thespiai relied to an important extent (61.4 per cent) on local and regional provision of ceramic products, in particular open and closed table-wares as well as (presumably) cooking wares. On a wider geographical scale, the Aegean, including central Greece, provided another significant share of the pottery, some 29 per cent. Finally, Thespiai received pottery, largely amphorae and table-wares, from a variety of sources from across the

Table 12.7. *The pottery from beyond the Aegean, classified according to provenance and functional category, in absolute and relative quantities.*

Provenance	Amphorae	Tablewares	Cooking Wares	Oil Lamp	n	%
Italy	34	10	2	-	46	20.2
Iberian Peninsula	4	-	-	-	4	1.8
North Africa	15	120	2	1	138	60.5
Cyprus	-	1	-	-	1	0.4
Egypt	1	-	-	-	1	0.4
Palestine	5	-	-	-	5	2.2
Levant/Egypt	1	-	-	-	1	0.4
Cilicia	3	2	-	-	5	2.2
Cilicia/Cyprus	13	-	-	-	13	5.7
Black Sea	2	-	-	-	2	0.9
Aegean/Black Sea	12	-	-	-	12	5.3
Total	90	133	4	1	228	
%	39.5	58.3	1.8	0.4		100.0

Mediterranean throughout the LHELL to LR period (*c.* 9.5 per cent). Except for Tanagra, these proportions for the ceramic supply are roughly matched in the other cities surveyed by the Boeotia Project.

The 'Export' of Thespian and Boeotian Products.
By comparison with the manufacture and circulation within Boeotia of pottery manufactured at Thespiai and other Boeotian cities, very little is known about its *export* beyond the region's borders. Within Boeotia, some level of exchange took place between Tanagra, Thespiai and Koroneia. Hyettos in northern Boeotia was particularly closely connected to Koroneia for ceramic products and, although a local ceramic group of its own is associated with Hyettos, the available clays may not have been suitable for the manufacture of 'finer' products such as table-wares. Interestingly, the 53 fragments from Koroneia that were identified at Thespiai present a sharp contrast with the three Thespian fragments thus far recognized at Koroneia, among some 6000 fragments from a similar time-span. Given that the finds collection of Koroneia is estimated to consist of some 55,000–60,000 fragments, the Thespian contribution seems likely to prove negligible. But in general, it remains the case that Boeotian cities largely catered for their own ceramic requirements and for that of their respective territories. Unfortunately, we remain uninformed of the role played by cities such as Thebes, Orchomenos (which after Sulla's sack in the early first century BC survived as a minor centre) and other places, whether in terms of local manufacture or of any possible imports from, or exports to, other Boeotian cities.

Beyond the borders of Boeotia, little has been actually recognized. We know of products from Askra reaching Athens (Hayes 2008, 94, fig. 44) and Corinth (Slane and Sanders 2005, 259, fig. 5, 262, 267, fig. 8, 270, 284), while some of the local Thespian products can barely, if at all, be distinguished from the supposed 'Askra Ware'. This may be explained by the use of similar clays and/or firing technologies, but it is also very likely that products from Askra will have reached Thespiai, and *vice versa*. Particularly interesting is Hayes' observation concerning an example of a gouged jug from the Athenian Agora, that it 'seems related to the Boeotian products [*sc.* Askra/Thespiai Stamped Ware – PB] that follow' (Hayes 2008, 93; cf. below). Cursory examination by visiting colleagues further suggests that Boeotian table-wares (and other ceramic products) were scarcely marketed beyond the region. Finally, a beehive from Athens recalls a few examples from Boeotia, as does the fabric description (Rotroff 2001).

Pottery as a Proxy for the Fluctuations in Thespiai's Fortunes.
For the ceramics of Hellenistic Thespiai, a more comprehensive picture can be found in the preceding chapter. What is striking, however, is the commoner appearance of Knidian amphorae by comparison to other major Aegean classes, a finding that emerges also for the other three main urban sites, Hyettos, Tanagra and Koroneia. Although a few Knidian and Rhodian stamps have been recorded, they are not enough to indicate any diachronic fluctuations in the import pattern. It is not impossible that we have hear an indirect reflection of the massive import of Knidian amphorae on the part of Delos and Athens (Koehler and Wallace Matheson 2004; Grace 1985, 6–7). It remains uncertain whether those *negotiatores* presumed to have moved to Boeotia following the demise of Delos, drawn by the prospect of the 'commercialisation of agricultural wealth' (Chapter 3, p. 116), were originally responsible for these lines of exchange. The 'major phase of settlement' in Boeotia of these Italian men of business and other interests (Chapter 7, pp. 236–8), between 50 BC and AD 20, was certainly purposeful, but whether they in part explain the occurrence of Italic amphorae at Thespiai and elsewhere (though their chronology cannot be pinpointed with any great precision) remains an open question; the relative proximity of Boeotia and central Greece to Italy is a factor that should not be overlooked. In relation to this, it is worth noting that, although no stamps have been recorded in Boeotia, one Statilius Sisenna Taurus, known through epigraphic evidence from Boeotia (Marchand 2013), has been brought into connection with a villa estate near Loron on the Istrian peninsula, where amphorae were presumably manufactured of type Dressel 6B, used for the transport of olive oil (Marion and Starac 2001).

Roman stylistic influence also permeated the local economic organization, on the evidence of the presumably ER measuring cup found in the *Kastro* (Schachter and Marchand 2012, 295–9), testifying to the uninterrupted official control of the local economy during the period. The fabric of this intriguing object appears to fit the 'local/closer regional' range. A recently completed re-study of the Roman-period ceramic finds from Askra suggests that probably more was being manufactured and circulated from these local industries than merely our Askra and Thespiai groups.

This epigraphic and archaeological evidence may also be brought into connection with Strabo's observation that in Boeotia only Thespiai and Tanagra 'still endure, but of all the rest only ruins and names are left' (*Geographica* ix 2.25). In addition, Plutarch recorded (*Fragment* 82) that in his time Askra was

uninhabited, and Pausanias' report (ix 29.2) from a little later confirms this. In the earlier second century BC, both Koroneia and Haliartos had been sacked by the Romans. The latter was never to be reoccupied, while the former had its surviving occupants sold into slavery, then repatriated under various limitations of action. This rather grim image of Boeotia, suggesting a region suffering an overall population decline, except for Thespiai and Tanagra (and even they are noted by Strabo as only 'moderately prosperous'), is not very easy to reconcile with the evidence for ceramic imports from such sites, most notably Koroneia. Koroneia, in fact, presents a relatively rich and varied repertoire of imported (L)HELL to ER pottery: study of part of the collected material thus far suggests no major gap in the ceramic sequence. The more intensive collection strategy could partly explain these higher counts; further, the absence of stratigraphic excavations at Koroneia and the lengthy date-ranges of some wares make it problematic to pin-point exactly the development of (imported) ceramic wares during the LHELL and ER periods. By contrast, only a handful of Italian pottery of HELL–ER date was identified at Hyettos, including a single, if uncertain, fragment of ITS (8 out of a *total* of 14,001 entries, or 0.06 per cent, compared with 45 out of a *total* of 14,345 entries [0.31 per cent] for Thespiai).

There is thus an apparent conflict in the evidence from, on the one hand, our surface surveys testifying to urban contraction at Thespiai and Hyettos (and probably at Tanagra and Koroneia too), supporting an apparent consensus in the historical sources; and, on the other, this quite significant import of exotic ceramics. Yet, rather than being simply contradictory, we might see this pattern as potentially informative on the divergent fates that befell the general indigenous population, the local élites and the immigrant Italian business community. Globalization and market integration were clearly reaching far beyond the main urban centres of the Roman empire and could also affect provincial settings at Thespiai and other Boeotian cities, as an effect of Roman absorption; yet they might have benefited only a narrow sector of society, while the remnant suffered depopulation and rural economic decline. A marked presence of foreign ceramic imports would be compatible with such a picture.

In ceramic terms, (L)HELL–LR Boeotia was wedged in between the Italian peninsula and the Aegean and, by extension, the Mediterranean and Pontic basins. In broader terms, Central Greece occupies an intermediate level: here, only a trickle of Corinthian and Athenian table-wares or oil lamps, and a handful of possible cooking ware fragments from Methana, can be identified, even though Corinth lay just opposite on the other coast of the Corinthian Gulf and Athens was reachable by road too. The festivals that were organized (Mouseia, Erotideia) also created significant foci for the production, consumption and circulation of goods (Osborne and Müller, this volume, Chapters 6 and 7; Rhodes and Osborne 2003, 367; Migeotte 2009, 129–31); they formed one of several channels through which local communities could become aware of new products, their shapes, decoration, or contents. In the case of Thespiai, however, there is some support for the idea that, relatively speaking, she was better connected to the 'western' than to the Aegean exchange patterns (see below). Her ancient port at Kreusis on the Corinthian Gulf (the bay at modern (Paralia) Livadostras), some 10 km south as the crow flies and probably about 15 km on foot, was used by Republican Roman armies to enter Boeotia (Chapter 7, pp. 231–2); goods and persons surely found their way to Thespiai and into Boeotia by this port (Arnaud 2015, 2–3).

The presence of Roman citizens, as well as the administrative status of Thespiai, contributed to its prosperity during the early Empire (see again Chapter 7). The presumed increase in Mediterranean-wide exchange under the peaceful conditions of the time, does leave its limited mark in the ceramic record (*e.g.* the Spanish and Cilician amphorae). But our insight into ER Thespiai relies more on other classes of evidence than that of pottery. During the MR and LR periods, there are signs that speak in favour of a more western orientation of ceramic supply. For example, the ratio between diagnostic ARSW (MR–LR, from Tunisia) and (Phocaean) LRC (LR, western Turkey) for the four Boeotian cities suggests that Thespiai and Koroneia, in western Boeotia, received comparatively more ARSW (*i.e.* 'western') imports (Table 12.8). It is noteworthy that a similar ratio between ITS and Eastern sigillatae seems to bear this out. The route via the Corinthian Gulf seems the more likely point of entry for these western products, although the stronger presence and more varied character of the ARSW at Tanagra suggests that, at times, different routes and redistributive mechanisms could perhaps have existed. The notion of 'western' and 'eastern' products is explored more fully elsewhere (Bes forthcoming b); suffice to say here that Thespiai and Koroneia on the one hand, and Tanagra and Hyettos on the other, in part belonged to different spheres when it came to the supply of Aegean and Mediterranean ceramic categories. A similar pattern can be observed for Corinth's eastern harbour Kenchreai, where cultural influences also generally have a stronger easterly emphasis (Pettegrew 2007, 776, n. 97; Rife *et al*. 2007, esp. 148, 167).

As mentioned earlier, the MR and above all the LR periods provide the clearest and densest ceramic

Table 12.8. *Absolute quantities of, and the ratios between, ARSW and LRC (above) and ITS and Eastern* sigillatae *(below), for the four major Boeotian urban sites surveyed by the Project.*

n			ratio	
ARSW	LRC		ARSW	LRC
35	2	Koroneia	17.5	1
69	11	Thespiai	6.3	1
183	53	Tanagra	3.5	1
29	15	Hyettos	1.9	1
ITS	ES		ITS	ES
10	8	Thespiai	1.3	1
6	22	Koroneia	0.3	1
28	116	Tanagra	0.2	1
1	11	Hyettos	0.1	1

data. The MR is largely represented by local/regional as well as imported table-wares (110 out of a total of 150 entries). Only two cooking ware entries – lids, imported – were recognized. This prompts us to explore, at least theoretically, the possibilities for incorporating the chronologically less diagnostic material (see below).

The LR material, more intensively even than in the preceding periods since Late Hellenistic times at the site, remains focused on the *Kastro* with its eastern 'suburb', with presumed cemetery zones beyond the halo. The five churches, including a possible Episcopal church within the *Kastro* enceinte, signify a Christianized religious landscape; the north and east churches were presumably surrounded by cemeteries (Chapter 3, pp. 118–9; cf. Rife *et al*. 2007, 144). Thespiai remained fairly well connected to Mediterranean exchange patterns, though this was still largely an Aegean affair (Table 12.9), with only token quantities of western and eastern products.

Thespiai, and Boeotia more generally, may have been experiencing the ripple effect of the new geopolitical and economic configuration, following the growth in importance of Constantinople. While developments and outcomes may have followed variable temporal paths, the fact that the prime centre of gravity of the Empire was now closer at hand should have had positive effects on Boeotian society and the regional economy. At least, this is believed to have happened more directly at Tanagra, which may have grasped the opportunity to become incorporated into a broader imperial economic system (Abadie-Reynal 1989; Karagiorghiou 2001); similar, if less direct, effects can be noted elsewhere (Poblome *et al*. 2008). Perhaps the initiation of amphora manufacture at Delion (Gerousi 2014), Tanagra's harbour, should be seen in the same light.

The intensity of LR occupation may possibly have been overestimated (cf. Pettegrew 2007), although Thespiai, like other urban and rural sites in Boeotia, definitely maintained a fairly high level of occupation and activity. The evidence for an EBYZ phase, scarce though it may be, suggests at least some sort of limited continuity of activity, following the demise of Roman political and economic hegemony in the eastern Mediterranean. How far the earthquake of AD 551 (Procopius viii. 25, 16–18) disrupted the urban and rural frameworks of Boeotia is not clear. A single fragment of ARSW, possibly of Hayes form 109, postdates this earthquake, along with a small group of perhaps seventh-century table-wares (cf. pp. 330–2), although to consider this as the 'missing link' between the LR and EBYZ periods might be stretching the evidence too far. Similarly late pieces are recognized at Hyettos (a presumed mid-seventh century ARSW plate, Bonifay Sigillée Type 57B (Bonifay 2004, 183–5, fig. 98.8), as well as a fragment of Slav Ware of seventh- to tenth-century date: A. Vionis, *pers. comm*.) and at Tanagra (*e.g*. Hayes forms 105 (not only early variants), 107, 108; but no late (Phocaean) LRC whatsoever).

It is in the MR and especially, once again, the LR periods that evidence for local pottery manufacture emerges more clearly. These MR and LR products encourage belief in experienced and 'profitable' local ceramic workshops, which in turn suggests some kind of up-turn in the economic life at the city, whatever its scale: this view is certainly preferable to the (perhaps outdated) perception of local manufacture as a sign that socio-economic conditions have deteriorated. When such local pottery production ceased altogether is something that cannot be determined on the basis of the current evidence from survey.

Such a picture fits well with the recovery in rural settlement around Thespiai in MR–LR times (*Testing the Hinterland*: 155–66), even though it is becoming commoner to question whether this LR 'boom-and-bust' in the Greek countryside was as dramatic or lasting as the survey data, taken at face value, suggest (as argued for the Thespian countryside in *Testing the Hinterland*

Table 12.9. *The MR and LR pottery classified by provenance, in absolute and relative quantities.*

	MR		LR	
Provenance	n	%	n	%
Aegean/Greece	17	11.3	313	17.0
EastMed	0	0.0	18	1.0
WestMed	52	34.7	43	2.3
Other/Undef.	54	36.0	1004	54.7
Boeotia/Thespiai	27	18.0	458	24.9
Total	150	100.0	1836	100.0

and, for the Corinthian countryside, in Pettegrew 2007). We remain uninformed as to the degree to which the Thespian wares supplied the countryside as well: we are assuming that pottery manufacture mostly took place in and around the LR *Kastro* (but see Table 12.5 and Fig. 12.17: not all the wasters were clearly datable, and this material has not been re-studied). The parties involved in the local production are equally unidentified, but the options clearly include the land-owning church (cf. Poblome and Brulet 2005), and the occupants of the military settlement.

Current insights allow us to picture a mostly internal, localized circulation within Boeotia proper for the output of each city, with Hyettos as the main exception. There are considerable differences between Koroneia – for which no definitive data are available yet – and Thespiai, when it comes to the proportion of local, regional and imported table-wares ('Food Consumption', Table 12.10): the percentages of local products at Koroneia, especially for the ER and MR periods, are strikingly high, even allowing for the fact that the typo-chronological framework of the local ceramic output there is 'work in progress'. Koroneia continues to stand out if one assumes that the 'Unidentified' category represents solely local and/or Boeotian products. Elsewhere, it is already clear that the ARSW attested at Thespiai and Tanagra shows diverging trajectories (Peeters *et al*. in press). As so far studied, the development of ARSW at Tanagra and Thespiai, and in their respective hinterlands, follows a fairly similar pattern from the early third century to the first decades of the fifth, but from then on Tanagra remained well-supplied with ARSW, whilst that at Thespiai dropped to limited quantities. The as yet unpublished evidence from Hyettos and Koroneia makes it clear that their import patterns are more in line with that of Thespiai than with that of Tanagra. In fact, within Boeotia, such is the diversity of the ceramic repertoire at Tanagra, with amphorae in particular, that it becomes ever clearer that Tanagra does not readily invite comparison with other parts of Boeotia (except in part with Hyettos, cf. Bes forthcoming b); instead, it followed a substantially divergent economic trajectory. The degree of accessibility to open Mediterranean waters is one factor that seems to have played an important role; Koroneia, a more land-locked place, was perhaps more focused on self-sufficiency and the intra-regional supply of, *inter alia*, its pottery, in particular to Hyettos, and possessed the (natural) resources for this. Yet Koroneia was not isolated, as is shown by its variety of long-distance imports; while its placing on the traditional main road from southern to northern Greece where it runs through Boeotia, connecting it with neighbouring regions, was also important here (Farinetti 2011, 45, fig. 5). In that context, it is worth noticing that only Koroneia (Cronias), along with Chaeroneia (Ceroni), are marked on the Peutinger Table.

To conclude, a few words can be said about the agricultural and other economic bases as explanatory factors for the strongly local and closer regional supply of pottery that is observed. The valley of Thespiai offers fertile and versatile land: 'As almost all of the land is potentially cultivable, though with varying yield and crop range, the overall carrying capacity of the land will be above the average for Greece' (Shiel and Stewart 2007, 106; see also Farinetti 2011, 54, fig. 3), and it is further argued that at times of lower population density – as in the LR period – soil fertility was comparatively better sustained (Shiel and Stewart 2007, 106). At times, however, Boeotia relied on external agricultural supplies (Rhodes and

Table 12.10. *Sherds classified under 'Food consumption' (local, regional and imported) for Thespiai and Koroneia, in absolute and relative quantities.*

Thespiai								
n	**ER**	**MR**	**LR**		**%**	**ER**	**MR**	**LR**
Thespiai	2	16	50		Thespiai	3.2	14.8	14.7
Boeotia	6	7	81		Boeotia	9.7	6.5	23.8
Imported	15	55	67		Imported	24.2	50.9	19.6
Undef.	39	30	143		Undef.	62.9	27.8	41.9
Total	62	108	341		*Total*	100.0	100.0	100.0
Koroneia								
n	**ER**	**MR**	**LR**		**%**	**ER**	**MR**	**LR**
Koroneia	126	115	40		Koroneia	78.8	81.0	51.3
Boeotia		2	1		Boeotia		1.4	1.3
Imported	10	7	27		Imported	6.3	4.9	34.6
Undef.	24	18	10		Undef.	15.0	12.7	12.8
Total	160	142	78		*Total*	100.0	100.0	100.0

Osborne 2003, 486–93) and, more importantly, the use and arrangement of the land fluctuated through time (Bintliff *et al*. 2007, *passim*; Pernin 2004). That said, soil composition and variety permitted a mixed land use that included the growing of cereals, tree crops (*e.g*. olives) and vegetables, but also animal grazing (Shiel and Stewart 2007, 108–9, Appendix 1; Migeotte 2009, 75, 82, 88; Rackham 1983), while bee-keeping and thus honey production are archaeologically attested, and it is not unthinkable that the honey was used as a flavourer for wine produced in the area. The depiction of Demeter/Kore, with corn wreaths, on coinage of the Boeotian federacy might reflect Boeotia's agricultural prosperity (see Chapter 14). In the nearby Valley of the Muses, beehive fragments comprise a remarkable 62 per cent (at least) of the total ceramic finds from the Late Antique period (Vroom 2004, 321, with table 2B), although their easier recognisability may favour them in such counts of diagnostic fragments. Higher percentages of beehives are anyway somewhat to be expected, if not unequivocally (see further below) in the more rural or less densely built-up areas.

Functional zoning: ceramic assemblages and use

Functional parameters

Pottery is potentially also of help in defining functional zones within a settlement – that is, in pinpointing areas that, at certain points in the settlement's existence, were used for distinct purposes: occupation and activities of a domestic, commercial, public, artisanal/industrial, or religious nature. The problems that face us with this task, in the case of survey archaeology, are best illustrated on the basis of several charts.

Fig. 12.13a–b shows the single-period data, classified first according to (supposed) function. As we have already seen, the quantities attributed to these four (single) periods differ widely, and we were only moderately successful in finding means to overcome this problem. The chart reveals other things too: first, the high percentages for 'Food Consumption' for the LHELL, ER and especially the MR periods. This supports the notion that LHELL–LR red slip table-wares are not only relatively more recognisable in the field, but are also better identifiable in the subsequent study phase, that is typo-chronologically (a point that is rightly raised elsewhere). Yet the emphasis should not lie exclusively on table-wares: a second point of interest is the considerable share of *functionally unidentified* pottery (28–35.6 per cent), except for the MR period where it is much lower (6 per cent). This latter point is presumably related to the previous one, when applied to survey material. Although we try to retrieve different strands of information from each sherd – shape,

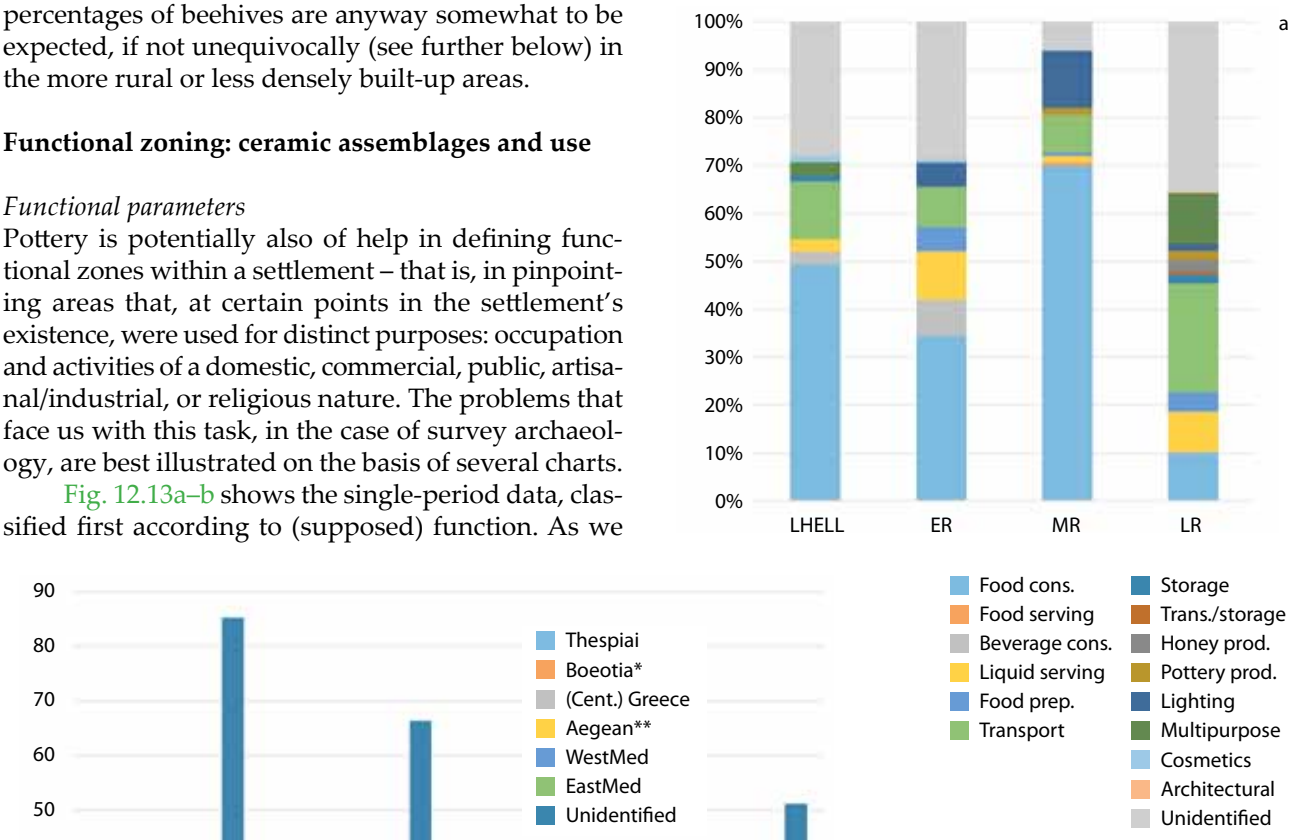


Figure 12.13a–b. *The single-period data classified by function (a – above), and by provenance (b – left), in relative quantities. *Casserole (fabric) is tentatively considered to be Boeotian for this purpose, and ** Kapitän II tentatively considered as Aegean.*

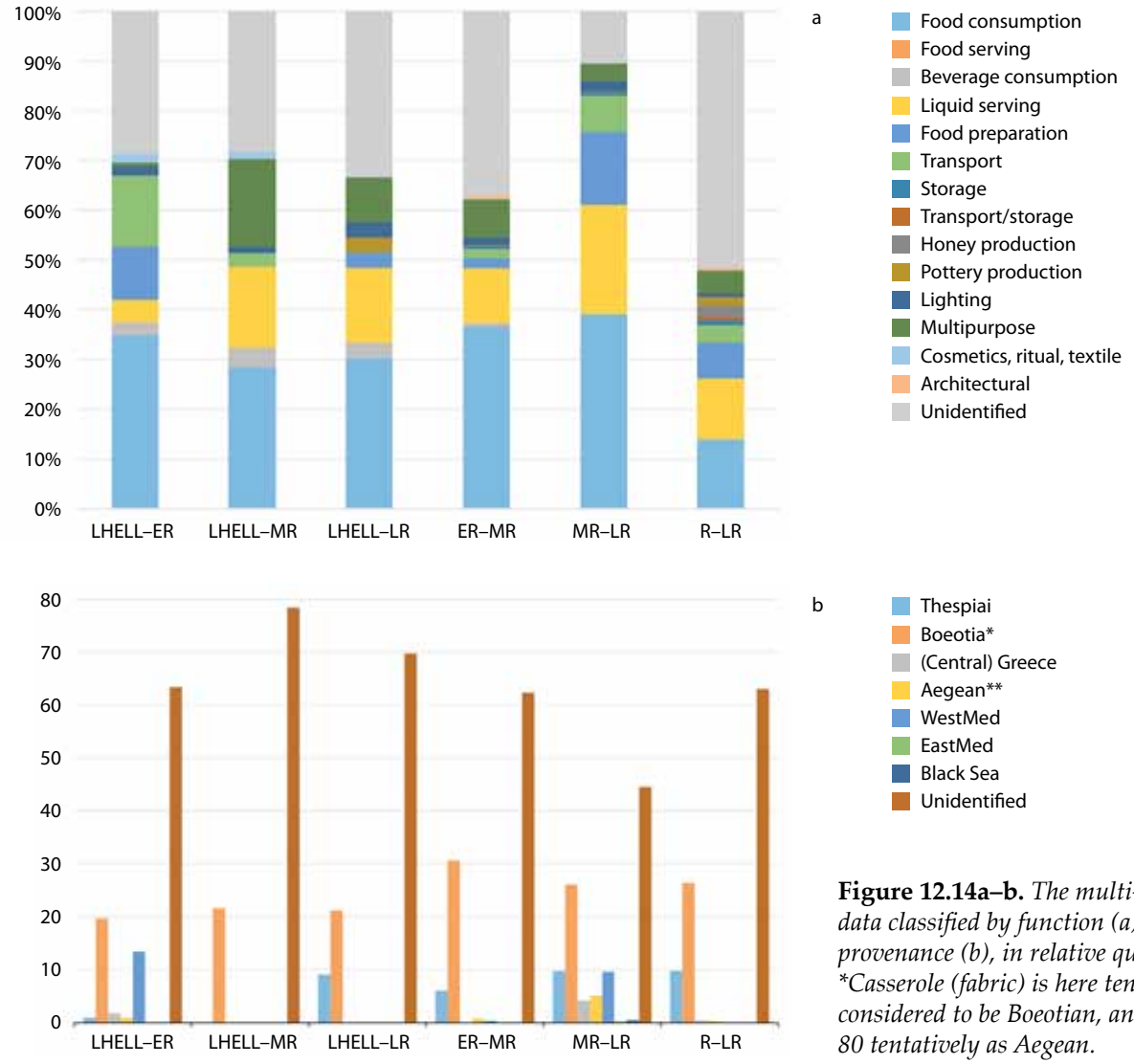


Figure 12.14a–b. *The multi-period data classified by function (a) and by provenance (b), in relative quantities. *Casserole (fabric) is here tentatively considered to be Boeotian, and **Zeest 80 tentatively as Aegean.*

supposed function, chronology, and so on – the rate of success is considerably lower than with excavated material. One further handicap, already mentioned, is the inherent 'palimpsest' character of survey pottery: together with fragmentation, it helps to make it difficult to associate a specific part of the material with a specific period or function. In Fig. 12.13a above, only for the LR period (omitting the 'Unidentified' group) do the proportions begin to approach a generalized pattern of expectation for functional proportions, as derived from excavation data. The multi-period material is of little help here (Fig. 12.14a–b): although we are still confronted with a substantial element of unidentified entries, the percentages for 'Food Consumption' are less dominant, which could be taken to strengthen the argument just made above: here again, they begin to approach the ranges we encounter in excavation data. Also noteworthy, at least for the periods other than the 'LHELL–ER' and 'MR–LR', is that the percentages for 'Food Preparation' are surprisingly low and do not match the higher ranges suggested by excavation data. Thirdly, in both the single- and multi-period data, the functional category 'Transport' shows percentages that are, once again, lower than one would expect (they are highest for the LR period at 22.7 per cent), and may thus be under-represented in the collected data. That no sherds at all were classified as 'Transport' for the widest 'LHELL–LR' period suggests a higher degree of chronological precision than, for instance, for 'Food Preparation'.

The question of course is, what are we looking for? A city such as Thespiai, throughout its existence, comprised zones with different functions, some of which we can no longer observe. Chapter 3 discusses a reconstruction of Thespiai for, among other periods, the HELL to LR. This generally involves an urban core,

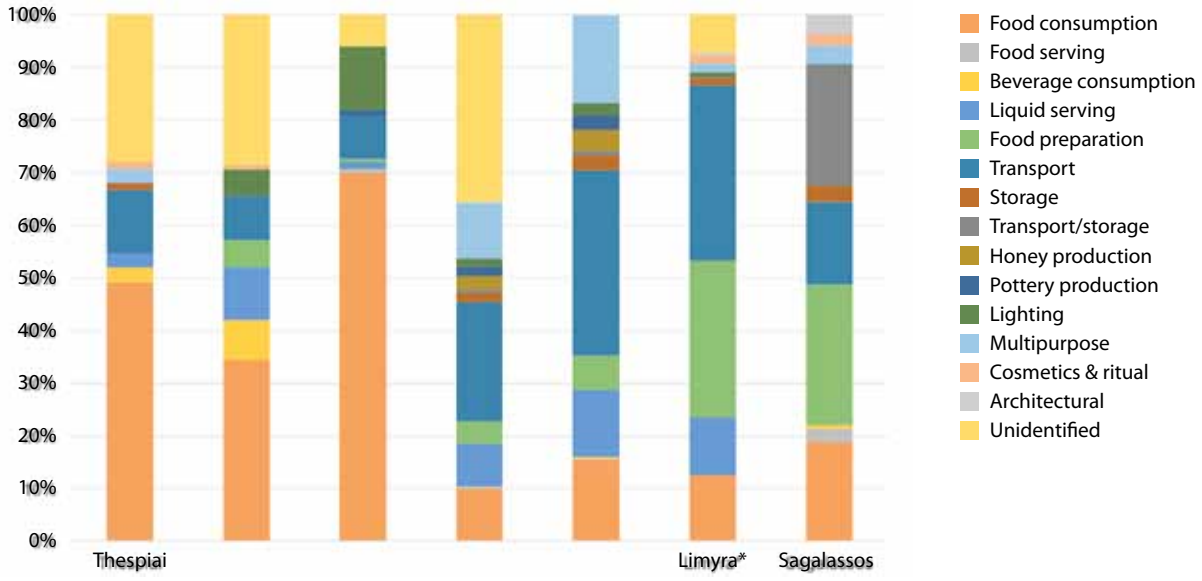


Figure 12.15. *Sherds from Thespiai, Sagalassos and Limyra classified according to function, in relative quantities. Some 26 residual or intrusive pieces have been omitted here (compare also Table 12.4a).*

surrounded by a site 'halo' and one or more cemetery zones, with the shifts that may have occurred therein. Elsewhere, experiments have been carried out in trying to tease out spatial-functional associations (Bintliff 2013, 197–8), though obviously a range of different factors could underlie any such association (Given 2004, especially table 2.2).

The data from Thespiai as such do not appear reliable enough for a very detailed investigation of the surface material. Given that the LR period was the last major phase of occupation, and assuming as a matter of convenience a settlement of generally domestic occupation, especially in the *Kastro* zone), a comparison with the two LR excavated contexts from Limyra and Sagalassos shows considerable discrepancies (Fig. 12.15). (Data from these contexts were used earlier (Table 12.4) to point out the disproportions in diagnostic fragments, as between the three sites). One might question the appropriateness of drawing on these contexts, as both assemblages from Asia Minor involve secondary deposits, at the same time reflecting different urban contexts: semi-public/commercial and possibly domestic waste respectively. But they show what we presume to be more balanced functional proportions. The most significant difference can be observed for the functional category 'Food Preparation': the percentages from both excavation samples range between 26.8 per cent and 29.7 per cent, figures which may need to be reduced a little, to take account of the generally higher breakage rate of cooking wares; but for Thespiai, the proportion does not exceed 5 per cent, or 6.4 per cent when the 'Unidentified' category is omitted. Surprisingly these cooking wares, despite being not only less visible but also less precisely diagnostic, do not yield substantially higher figures in the proportions of the multi-period surface material either. The three main categories in the excavation samples are 'Food Consumption' (12.5–18.9 per cent), 'Food Preparation' (26.8–29.7 per cent) and Transport (15.6–33.4 per cent). At Thespiai, apart from 'Food Preparation', it is only the figures in the 'LR–Unid.' column that very roughly invite comparison with the excavation data.

Pettegrew's functional analysis (Table 12.11), dealing in larger and wider categories, conforms better

Table 12.11. *Pettegrew's functional classification compared with that used at Thespiai, in relative quantities.*

Pettegrew 2007	%-range	≈Function	Excavation (LR)	Thespiai (LHELL–LR)
Fine Wares	6–10% (<15%)	≈Food+Beverage Consumption	12.5–22%	10–70%
Amphorae	33–66%	≈Transport (mostly)	33.4–38.5%	8–22.7%
Cooking Wares	1–30%	≈Food Preparation	26.8–29.7%	0.7–5%
Plain Wares	20–50%	≈Liquid Serving+Multipurpose?	3.5–12.6%?	1.3–19%

overall to the excavation data presented here, although he rightly emphasizes that he does not seek 'to establish a standard of proportions', and the exceptions that he himself refers to underscore that point (Pettegrew 2007, 765–9). Here, the only real exception occurs with Pettegrew's category 'Plain Wares': neither the percentages for Thespiai nor those for the comparative excavated material match Pettegrew's, assuming of course that the analogous categories are chosen correctly. Given the evaluation of the proportions of diagnostic fragments in Table 12.4 and Fig. 12.1, any attempt to perform the same exercise by using only rims, bases and handles would not lead to more satisfactory results.

Table 12.12. *A summary of the various methods of redistribution.*

Method	Description
1	Depiction of the single-period data
2	Grouping of the diagnostic pottery of Method 1 into two chronological blocks: LHELL–MR and LR
3	Proportional division of the multi-period data across the periods they are dated to
4	Redistribution of the multi-period data across the periods they are dated to, taking the variable lengths of the periods in question into account
5	Adding the multi-period data to the last period to which they are dated
6	Redistributing the multi-period data across the four single period, based on the proportions of the data attributed to these single periods
7	Redistributing the result of Method 6 across intervals of 50 years

Table 12.13a. *Method 1 of redistribution, with the results of applying Methods 2 to 6 to the multi-period data, in absolute quantities.*

		LHELL	ER	MR	LR
Methode 1	Single Period	75	119	150	1836
Methode 2	Two Periods	344			1836
Methode 3	Equal	89	1000	1158	795
Methode 4	Period Length	570	761	761	951
Methode 5	To Upper Period		112	751	2179
Methode 6	Period %	105	166	209	2562

Single and multi-period data combined

One exercise that can be carried out, to make more sense of the data in question, is to apply a number of *redistributive* techniques, aimed at incorporating the multi-period data into the picture. This does nothing to resolve their multi-period character; the aim is rather to attempt to set minimum and maximum quantitative boundaries for all the data, so as to explore theoretically the ratio of difference between the four (single) periods in question, as well as compensating for the supposed poorer visibility and representativeness of older periods, and/or of certain functional categories. Although this admittedly implies a linear function for this latter factor, we must at the same time consider ways of incorporating the chronologically less precise material – some 65 per cent of the whole!

These techniques have previously been applied to a portion of the data from Tanagra: Table 12.12 picks out the essence of the seven stages of the technique used, while Table 12.13a–b and Fig. 12.16 contain the results of applying these techniques to the single- and multi-period data.

What we can extract, using the single-period data and that of methods 3 to 6, are lower and upper quantitative boundaries, providing us with some freedom to explore theoretically the quantitative and chronological limits of the data (the upper segment of Table 12.14 below). The rows 'Single + Min.' and 'Single + Max.' in Table 12.14 show the minimum and maximum quantities assignable to each individual period, added to each single-period count. The heading 'Increase Factor' gives an idea of the comparison between the redistributed data and the single-period data. It is interesting to observe the downward linear trend across the periods, which might lend support to the idea that, on multi-period sites such as Thespiai, the earlier the phase, the less well it is represented on the surface. This would in turn reinforce the case that, of all four periods discussed here, the ER is the most poorly represented. The 'true' ratios may lie somewhere in the middle (the middle segment of Table 12.14): the 'Increase Factor' based on the average values – the total of methods 3 to 6 divided by four – instead of on minimum and maximum values, gives rather different ratios; only that for the LR period is

Table 12.13b. *The results of applying Method 7 of redistribution to the multi-period data, in absolute quantities, for 50-year chronological intervals.*

		Chronological interval															
Methode 7	Proportion+ Length	150–101	100–51	50–1	1–50	51–100	101–150	151–200	201–250	251–300	301–350	351–400	401–450	451–500	501–550	551–600	601–650
		50.0	50.0	50.0	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	52.3	52.3	52.3	52.3	512.4	512.4	512.4	512.4	512.4

Table 12.14. *A comparison of increase factors, based on minimum, maximum and average values, in absolute quantities for the four periods.*

	LHELL	ER	MR	LR
Single Period	75	119	150	1836
Minimum	0	112	209	795
Maximum	570	1000	1158	2562
Single+Min.	75	231	359	2631
Single+Max.	645	1119	1308	4398
Increase Factor	8.6	4.8	3.6	1.7
	LHELL	**ER**	**MR**	**LR**
Single Period	75	119	150	1836
Average	191	510	720	1622
Single+Average	266	629	870	3458
Increase Factor	3.5	5.3	5.8	1.9
	LHELL	**ER**	**MR**	**LR**
Increase Factor	8.6	4.8	3.6	1.7
Increase Factor	3.5	5.3	5.8	1.9

roughly the same. Again, the representativeness of the data is seen to be far from ideal.

A further small experiment may bring more balance to the problematic category of 'Food Preparation', if for convenience we identify this with the functional category 'Cooking Wares'. Whereas the percentages for the 'Single-Period' and especially the 'Multi-period' vary wildly, when those of the 'Multi-period' are distributed *evenly* across their respective periods (Table 12.15) and these are then added to the 'Single-Period' data, proportions emerge that, at least for the ER to LR periods, appear more 'realistic' when compared to Table 12.11 (Pettegrew's classification).

In Chapter 3 (*passim*), repeated attempts were made to interpret the multi-period data, in relation to the single-period distribution maps of finds. To take a notable instance, the spatial pattern of the MR–LR sherds was found to mimic the ER distribution far more closely than that of LR, suggesting that the majority of this cross-period class might be used to

Table 12.15. *Even redistribution of the relative quantities of the multi-period material of 'Food Preparation.'*

				LHELL	ER	MR	LR
Single-period				0.0	5.0	0.7	4.1
	Total %	Period	Division Factor				
Multi-period	10.7	LHELL–ER	2	5.4	5.4		
	3.0	LHELL–LR	4	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
	2.1	ER–MR	2		1.1	1.1	
	14.7	MR–LR	2			7.4	7.4
	7.0	R–LR	3		2.3	2.3	2.3
Total				6.1	14.5	12.2	14.5

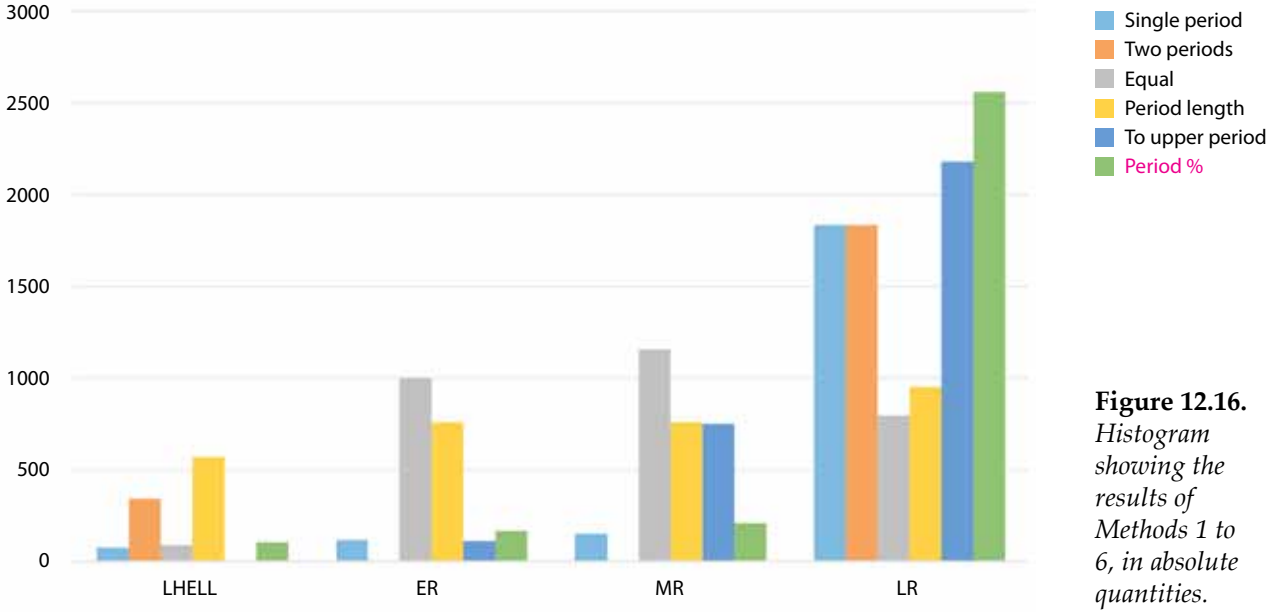


Figure 12.16. *Histogram showing the results of Methods 1 to 6, in absolute quantities.*

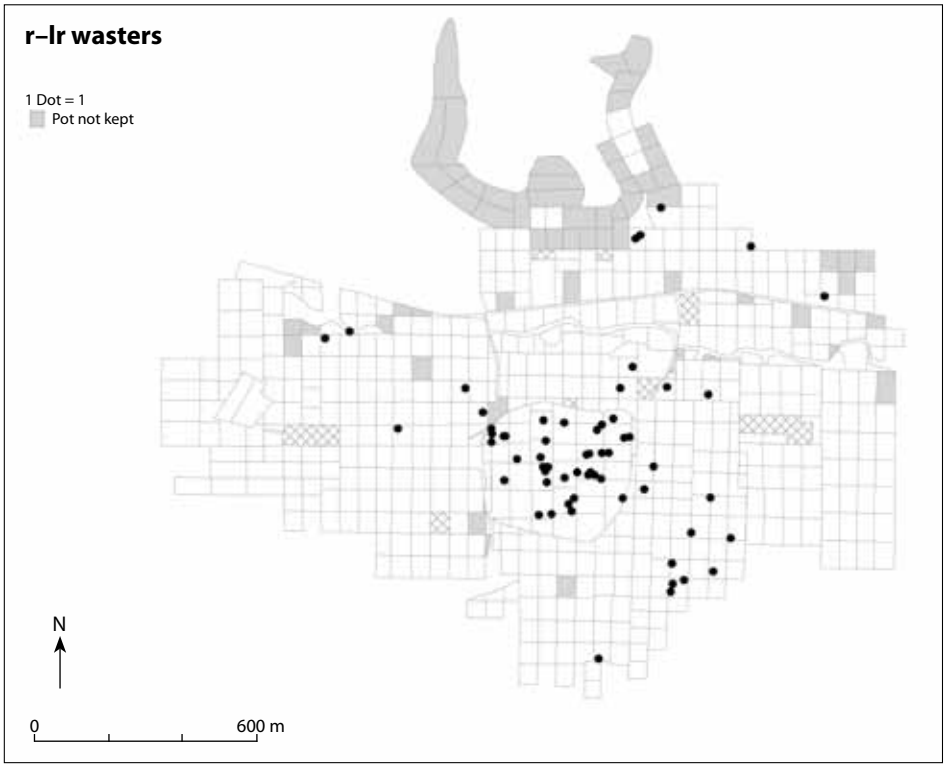


Figure 12.17. *Spatial distribution of Roman-period waster fragments (repeated from Fig. 3.49).*

boost the under-represented centuries of the MR (see above, pp. 120–22 with Map 3.33*)*. While the chapter in question should be consulted for specific examples and further argumentation, the two approaches only partly overlap in their attempts to incorporate the multi-period data. For one thing, the techniques of redistribution do not capture the same spatial depth as is offered by detailed map analysis. The message should be that no single approach or method is likely to deliver an acceptable solution. The truth may well lie somewhere in the proverbial middle, to be found by a combination of these (and perhaps other) approaches.

Functional dimensions

To go a little deeper into functional zoning, a limited series of specific maps may serve to highlight distribution patterns that can shed additional, albeit limited, light on the functional use of space within urban Thespiai. These five examples, therefore, may be seen as 'windows', assisting as supporting evidence for broader ideas and interpretations put forward in this chapter and elsewhere in this volume.

The first, repeated from Chapter 3, shows the spread of sherds identified as wasters (n=91), that is fragments that reflect actual pottery production in and around R to LR Thespiai (Fig. 12.17, to be taken with Table 12.5). One can observe an obvious scatter within the confines of the *Kastro*, although not every piece at Thespiai belongs to the LR phase. This might reflect pre-LR ceramic activities, or the fact that not all wasters were clearly datable, but we might in any case expect artisanal activities taking place in urban centres by the LR period (Uleners and Poblome 2014). It is also of interest is that LR wasters, albeit not many, were found well beyond the *Kastro* as well, up to a distance of 400–500 m, not all of them in zones interpreted as still in permanent occupation at this time. Again, several explanations present themselves: first, that settlement activity did in fact take place, but not on a scale that survey archaeology is able to detect; secondly, that these wasters were once embedded in the garbage produced by the *Kastro*, and later wheeled out to the immediate environs as fertilizer, or simply to get rid of it; thirdly, that LR Thespiai, comprising the *Kastro* and an eastern suburb, was surrounded by five cemetery zones, with an intermediate suburban 'halo' zone. The eastern and northern cemetery zones are each held to be linked to a church. LR finds are not uncommon in these latter zones, but the northern cemetery zone also produced two wasters, the eastern none. It was not uncommon for burial zones to be spatially associated with artisanal activities (Poblome

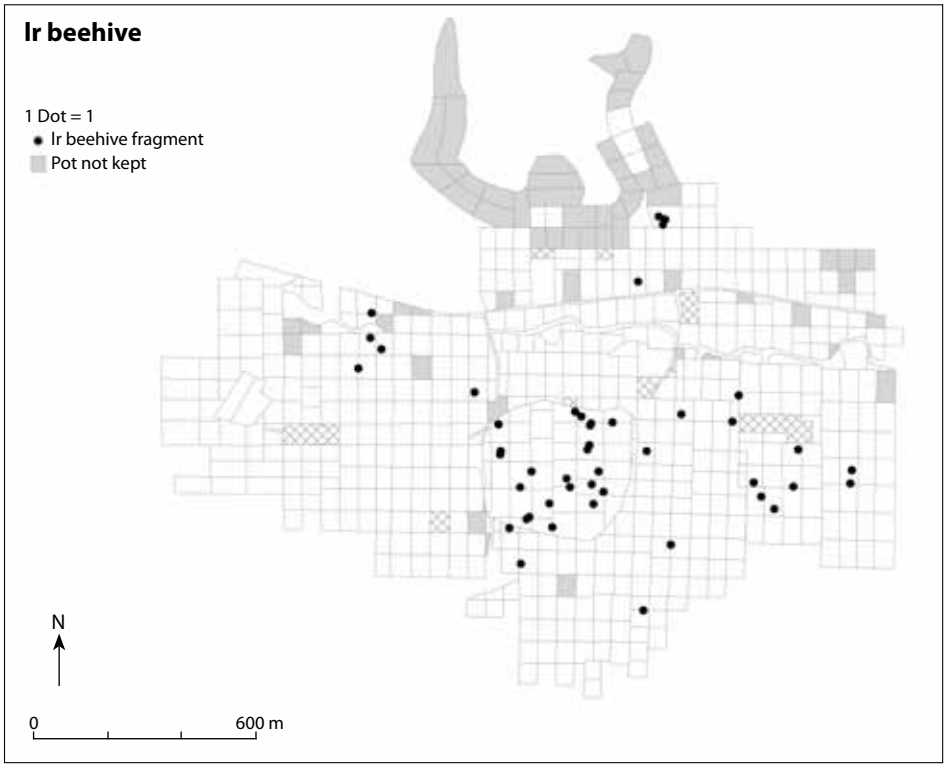


Figure 12.18. *Spatial distribution of LR beehive fragments.*

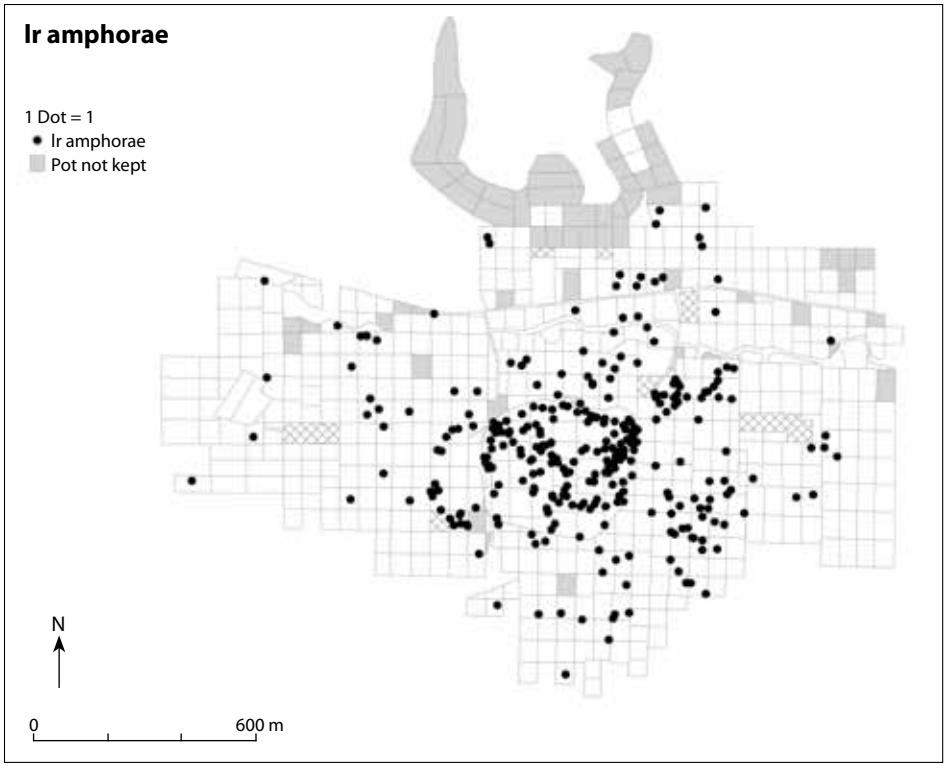


Figure 12.19. *Spatial distribution of LR amphora fragments.*

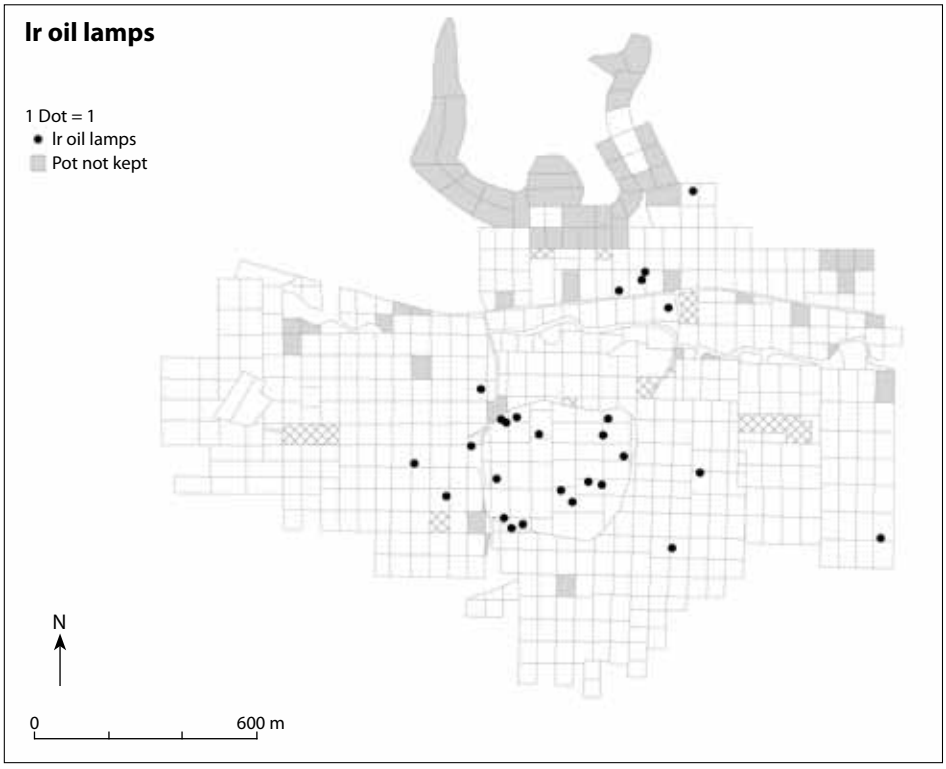


Figure 12.20. *Spatial distribution of LR oil lamp fragments.*

et al. 2001), yet any clue for such activity at Thespiai must remain tentative.

Attention should also be paid to what happened in both zones afterwards. Both churches continued to exist in MBYZ and F times, with a village core surrounding each. The material from these post-LR settlement foci, in much the same way as the LR pottery obscures LHELL, ER and MR Thespiai within what was to become the *Kastro*, obstructs any clear-cut interpretation. At the same time, we find only a few LR wasters to the west of the *Kastro*, where supposedly no post-LR occupation had developed. All this points to a relatively limited scale, either of pottery production, or of the subsequent disposal of waste. The only possible exception is a thin scatter that extends to the south-east of the *Kastro*, in between two supposed cemetery zones, which may yet still be part of, or reflect, the occupied area. This notion finds support not only in the general urban-rural model for Thespiai, but also in the fact that only a single waster was recognized in the rural survey (Bintliff *et al*. 2007, 237, hamlet Site LSE 7, dated MR–LR). Although the pottery from the rural survey was not re-studied, the presence of numerous wasters there can be excluded. This piece, found about 1 km south of the *Kastro*, is better explained as the product of limited local production at Site LSE7, rather than as the of result waste disposal from the *Kastro*, at this considerable distance. It may be worth noting that no imported table-wares of MR–LR date were collected at LSE 7 (Peeters *et al*. in press).

A second, and potentially partly related map, shows the distribution of LR beehive fragments (Fig. 12.18). Although beehives are difficult to date, rim fragments do bear some resemblance to the rim profiles of plain wares, at least in the Boeotian context. Once again, one can observe a fair number of fragments within the *Kastro* and a more dispersed scatter to its east. Of possible interest are the two small scatters to the north and to the north-west of the *Kastro*, both of them areas where we noted one or more LR ceramic wasters. In the overall maps of LR pottery in Chapter 3 (Maps 3.32–34), denser pottery scatters occur in both these zones; yet regardless of their small size, the coincidence of these two foci of wasters and beehive fragments may hint at some combination of agricultural and artisanal activities, at a limited distance from the main occupied area. Both areas also fall within what have been recognized as cemetery zones; we may perhaps envisage small-scale activities, possibly with non-permanent installations, at negligible distances from the *Kastro*, in a zone that is no longer urban but not yet rural either.

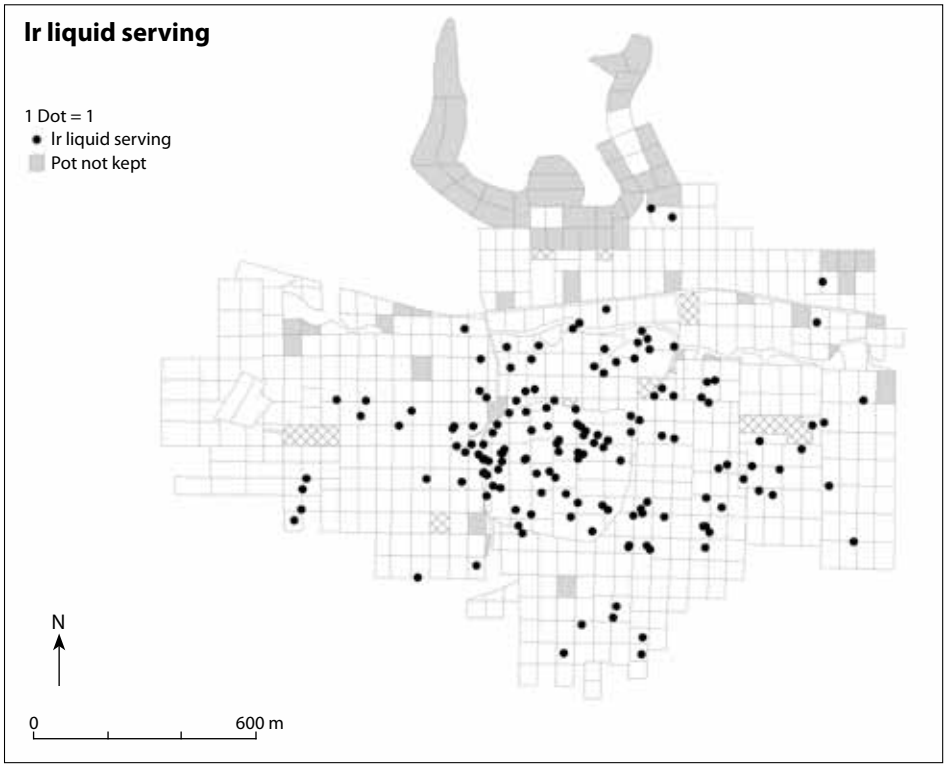
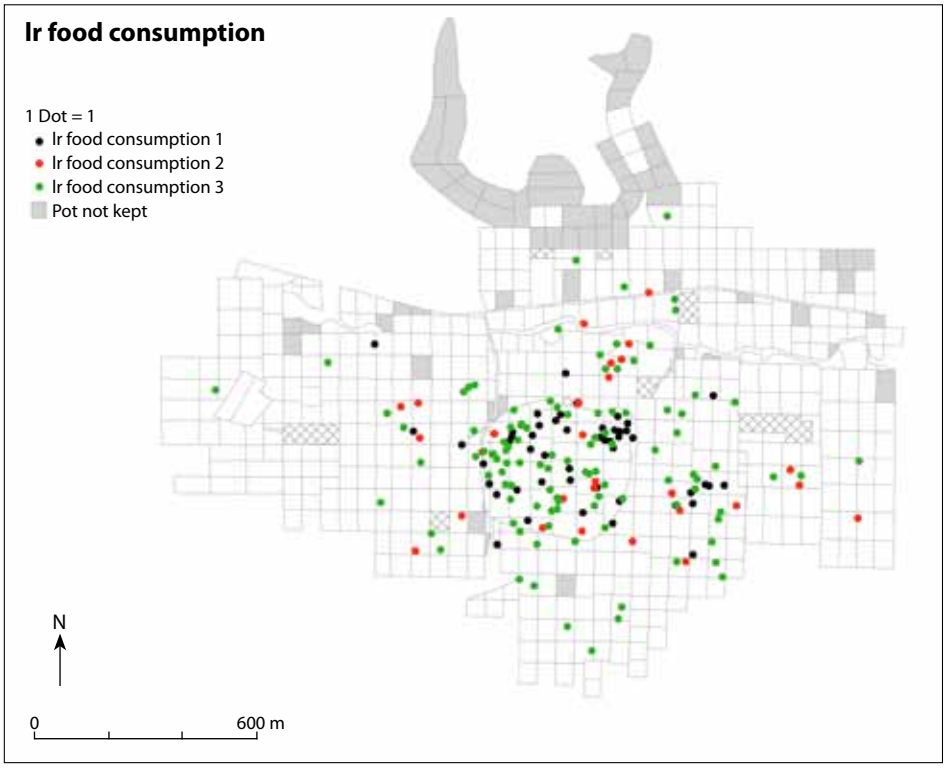


Figure 12.21. *Spatial distribution of LR 'Liquid Serving' fragments – mostly jugs.*

A third map may again be related, even if only on questionable premises. Fig. 12.19 shows the distribution of LR amphorae. Yet again, we note a heavy concentration within the *Kastro*, a thin scatter to its west and a more widespread dispersal to its east. Further afield the scatter thins out and, although a waste-disposal explanation cannot be ruled out, some of these areas are interpreted as cemetery zones. LR burial customs regularly included tile graves, yet burials in reused amphorae are also attested. Most archaeological examples of this practice, however, seem to come from the western Mediterranean, whether or not this reflects a genuine discrepancy in ancient custom, rather than in research and publication. Even if this is an intriguing idea, it cannot be archaeologically substantiated: the occurrence of LR amphorae beyond the immediately occupied area cannot yet be taken to imply the presence of cemetery zones.

Fourth, and to be taken in conjunction with the previous map, comes Fig. 12.20, showing the spread of LR oil lamps. The presence of lamp fragments within the *Kastro* is unsurprising, but the next issue to be raised is again that of Identifying Roman-period cemeteries in survey archaeology: a particularly problematic matter, as we have seen, and one primarily related to the grave-goods (if any) that were placed within the grave. The difficulty is well illustrated through recent research by the Kenchreai Cemetery Project (Rife *et al*. 2007), which concludes that, as a general rule, the funerary pottery encountered would have equally suited a domestic setting. Though this rule does not necessarily apply everywhere (e.g. Chamilaki 2010), it does conform to the impression derived from a cursory survey of published grave finds.

Archaeological research has shown that, in LR times too, oil lamps were given to the deceased as grave goods (e.g. Rife *et al*. 2007, 172–4), although one might reiterate that, at Thespiai, waste disposal could also account for the dispersal of oil lamps outside the *Kastro*. Of particular note however is the small scatter lying to the north of the city, in an area that is loosely associated with one of the two Early Christian churches, Agios Athanasios. Even though the church lies at a distance of some 100–125 m from the scatter of the three or four lamp fragments to its west, this is in the zone where a long test trench was excavated by the Greek Archaeological Service in 2013 (see Chapter 4, Addendum, pp. 196–8). This trench followed the modern east–west road that runs north of the *Kastro*, and laid bare burials belonging to different periods – including an enormous platform, in *opus caementicium*, plausibly the foundation of an (ER?) monumental



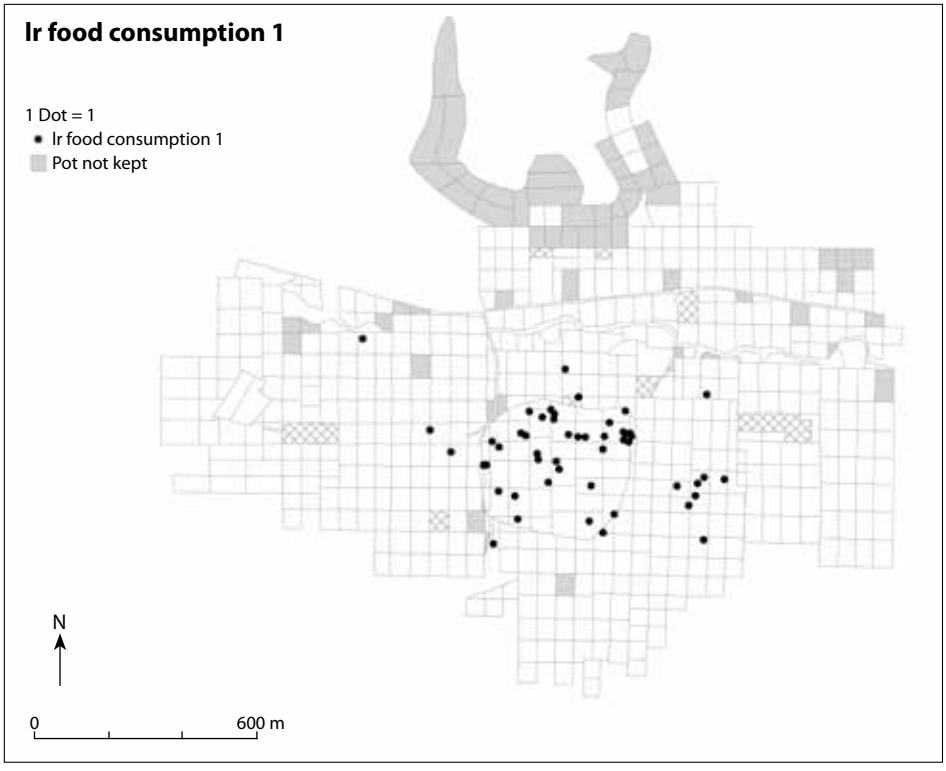


Figure 12.22a–b. *(a) Spatial distribution of LR 'Food Consumption' sherds (mostly bowls, dishes and plates): black = ARSW and (Phocaean) LRC; red = all categories attributed to Thespian manufacture (see Table 12.10 above), which includes the 'reduced firing' category; green = all other categories. (b) Spatial distribution of LR long-range imported 'Food Consumption' sherds (mostly bowls, dishes and plates). Black again = ARSW and (Phocaean) LRC.*

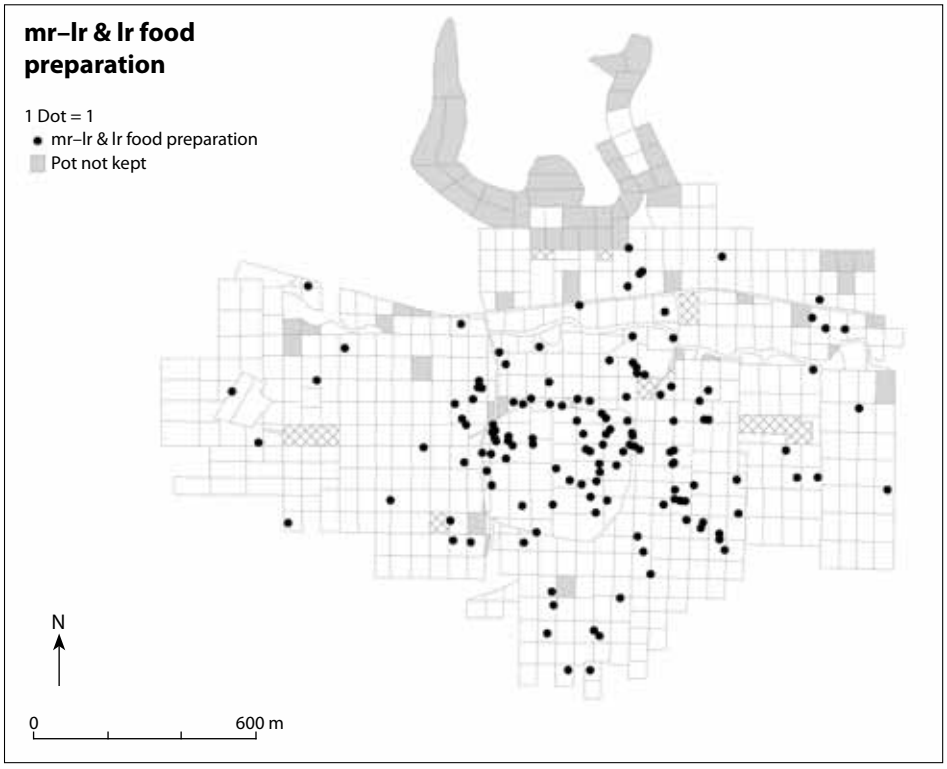


Figure 12.23. *Spatial distribution of MR–LR and LR 'Food preparation' sherds (mostly cooking vessels).*

grave structure. As such, it does not contradict the possibility that the small scatter of LR lamp fragments are remnants of burials. Unfortunately, the distribution of LR 'Liquid Serving' vessels – jugs and juglets – likewise offers only an uncertain criterion for identifying burials or cemeteries (Chamilaki 2010); and whilst Fig. 12.21 does indeed show some outliers beyond the settlement area, they too cannot unequivocally be classed as grave goods.

Finally, there is one curious aspect that emerges from the distribution map for LR 'Food Consumption' – that is, local, regional and imported open table-ware vessels, such as cups, bowls and dishes (Fig. 12.22a–b). We can observe generally comparable patterns for LR amphorae (Fig. 12.19), and now for 'Food Consumption' (Fig. 12.22a–b) and (MR–LR) 'Food Preparation' (Fig. 12.23), showing a denser find concentration within the *Kastro* and to its immediate east, with a more extensive but thinner distribution in the general city survey area. Yet the clearly recognisable long-distance imports (ARSW, (Phocaean) LRC) are virtually only attested within the *Kastro* and to its east (Fig. 12.22b). It is not easy to interpret this pattern. One, perhaps optimistic, explanation might be that such imports were higher valued. There is some more general evidence to support this, such as the incidence of repair holes: the single repair hole that was found at Thespiai was in fact on a MR–LR fragment of ARSW. While a down-turn in supply might equally well explain this, the explanation in terms of value might tell us something about the socio-economic profile of Thespiai's LR population. We should be wary of employing a circular argument, but it need not be a coincidence that the focus of these finds is located as it is, assuming that the LR occupational focus was within and to the east of the *Kastro* (Chapter 3, pp. 116–20). Alternatively, as these imports comprise only a minority of the functional category 'Food Consumption' (50 out of 183 entries, *c.* 27.3 per cent), the distribution pattern could simply be deceptive, since the less common a category or ware is, the smaller the chance of its being encountered in the wider surveyed area, in much the same way as was shown for prehistoric finds from the city survey (see Chapter 3, pp. 49–51).

Conclusion

The ceramic data collected by the Boeotia Project at ancient Thespiai, and specifically those which belong to the LHELL to LR period, were approached from several angles, in order to obtain interpretive insights into how the city's urban zone and ceramic production

and supply developed, through a period covering nearly a millennium.

Whereas detailed map analysis and diachronic site interpretation is to be found elsewhere in this volume (Chapter 3), this chapter has been focused specifically on the methodological framework and the ceramic data in their own right, beginning with a demonstration of the skewed composition of the raw data by comparison with excavated material. Although efforts were made to achieve some balance in this, the conclusion was inevitable that this collection cannot stand as a representative sample, to be used in all its detail for a full and reliable analysis. In order to overcome this, the data were also looked at from several alternative angles, which were judged to be relatively trustworthy.

The first aim was to map Thespiai's economic ties, within Boeotia and with the Mediterranean lands more generally. Here, in spite of the large proportion of unidentified pottery, Thespiai was shown to have relied primarily on pottery supply from local and closer regional sources, with only a small portion coming from further afield. On the extended assumption that a larger share of the unidentified pottery also originates from Thespian, Boeotian or central Greek sources, Thespiai emerges as being firmly embedded in a regional framework of ceramic production and supply. This is further borne out by the range of shapes and decorative schemes, which clearly link up very well, at least in part, with ceramic groups from elsewhere in Boeotia, as well as neighbouring regions. On present evidence, Thespiai seems to have had relatively less in common with Tanagra, and perhaps eastern Boeotia (and Attika) more generally, than it had with western Boeotia and parts of the adjacent regions. Whether the local ceramic output and its external supply fluctuated through time is still unknown; the local manufacture of pottery remains an elusive element until the MR period – which may in turn be another survey-related factor.

The second part of this chapter concentrated on identifying spatial differences in function in the composition of the surface collection, with the aim of distinguishing zones with different functions during the periods under study. There was a specific focus on the LR period, as being the best represented, as well as the latest major period of occupation, over most of ancient Thespiai. The main categories identified – amphorae, cooking wares (in this case for MR–LR only) and table-wares – all present a spatially roughly homogeneous pattern, presumably reflecting not only domestic settlement, but also the dispersal of rubbish into the immediate, probably no longer occupied zone or suburban halo. Both in and beyond the immediate confines of the *Kastro*, clues could be observed that tentatively pointed to specific functional zones. Based on the hypothetical reconstruction of LR Thespiai given in Chapter 3, the distribution of specific categories – beehives, oil lamps and amphorae – offered tentative support to existing notions about cemetery locations, and the equally tentative identification of one or two zones, to the north and north-west of the LR city, where agricultural and/or artisanal activities may have been practised.

In summary, despite some problems integral to the raw data, the Late Hellenistic to Late Roman pottery collected in the city of Thespiai could at least in part be employed to further our understanding of the city's economic connections, as well as offering insights, at least for the LR period, into its spatial and functional layout.

Acknowledgments

We are particularly grateful to John Bintliff and Anthony Snodgrass for the opportunity to (re)study the Late Hellenistic to Late Roman pottery from urban Thespiai. Their comments on a first draft significantly improved the text. Our re-study could build on the salutary earlier work by John Hayes, a highly informative experience that significantly advanced our study. There were fruitful discussions on matters of methodology, identification and interpretation with colleagues in the Boeotia Project – Kalliopi Sarri, Vladimir Stissi, Athanasios Vionis and Mark van der Enden – and we duly thank them. We are grateful to Emeri Farinetti for clarifying database questions and for creating the distribution maps. Bruno Vandermeulen energetically took on the task of photographing our selected finds (except where noted), and Mike Carremans and Eliane Mahy did a wonderful job in respectively making and digitizing the pottery profile drawings. Visits by Kathleen Slane, Mark Hammond, Pláton Petrídis, Guy Ackermann and Simone Zurbriggen were all helpful in establishing and refining identifications as well as generating ideas, and we are most grateful to them. We also express our appreciation to Martin Seyer, director of the Austrian excavations at Limyra, for his permission to use ceramic data from that site, which are under study by the first author. The four main and other supplementary study campaigns, during which we were based first in Thebes and later at Evangelistria, were particularly productive and enjoyable stays, and we warmly thank everyone else who contributed in various ways to making these possible. The research for this chapter was supported by the CORES network of the Belgian Programme on Inter-university Poles of Attraction (http://iap-cores.be/).

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